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"LET US TAKE A WALK DOWN FLEET STREET."

THE HIGHWAY OF LETTERS

AND

ITS ECHOES OF FAMOUS FOOTSTEPS

98850

BY

THOMAS ARCHER

AUTHOR OF
"SIXTY YEARS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PROGRESS,"
"DECISIVE EVENTS IN HISTORY,"
ETC. ETC.

NN-Y-33

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PREFACE.

In these days of ruthless removal of ancient landmarks, we never know for how long any locality may be spared to us. In London, at any rate, objects which to-day are so familiar to the wayfarer in the streets that he is ready to regard them as monuments, will to-morrow have disappeared, and he will be left idly gaping at an empty space, which gapes at him in return.

The demolition of the remnant of some ancient houses in Fleet Street not unnaturally suggested that the street itself—latterly, with no architectural attractions except for some large and imposing piles of buildings here and there, incongruously breaking the sordid monotony of the shabby shops and houses—has been, since the first makers of English traversed it, "The Highway of Letters." It therefore seemed fitting that some kind of memorial should be written concerning it in that aspect.

The present volume does not, it is almost needless to say, profess to be more than a gossipy reference to people and achievements which characterise the story of Fleet Street in its relation to the growth of literature and to changes in social and political aspects at various periods. The book is intended to be a chatty indication of what might be expanded into a more

elaborate chronicle; but the author trusts that he may at least claim the merit of accuracy, secured by some research; and though the volume may appear to consist of a series of desultory sketches, it is hoped that it will be found not only consecutive and suggestive, but entertaining. Should there arise a murmured objection that in some instances it extends its local references beyond the actual boundaries of the historical thoroughfare, it may be obvious that in order to preserve reasonable continuity some of the *habitués* of Fleet Street must be followed to other resorts.

THOMAS ARCHER.

Clapton, March, 1893.

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THE

HIGHWAY OF LETTERS.

CHAPTER I.

WITH CHAUCER ON FLEET BRIDGE.

The Highway of Letters before Printing—Turnmill Brook—River of Wells—Hole-bourne—The Fleet—The Palace and the Prison—Fleet Bridge—Aspect of Streets and Houses—Churches—Mansions—"Mine Inn"—Temple Bar—The Temple and the Templars—Old and New Settlements of Templars—Survivals—Knights Hospitallers—Successors—Serjeants—Masters of the Rolls—The World of Letters—A Thousand Years before Milton—With Chaucer and Gower on Fleet Bridge—Good Company in Fleet Street—Costume—Eating and Drinking—"Boltas Mootes"—"Paradise"—Edward III.—John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster—Baynard's Castle—Wycliffe at St. Paul's Church—Riots of the Citizens against Lancaster—Tumult in Fleet Street—Sack of the Savoy.

ARMORIAL DEVICE OF INNER TEMPLE.

FLEET STREET may be said to have been "*the Highway of Letters*" long before William Caxton set up his printing press at the Almonry in Westminster — long before printed books had been seen in England or on the Continent of Europe.

When the Tower of London was a royal residence at the eastern extremity

of the City, the Castle called "the King's Wardrobe," and the Great Palace of Bridewell, named after the Well of St. Bridget, were the dwellings of the Sovereign in the western or fashionable quarter, represented by the bank of the River Thames beyond Ludgate and the vicinity of "the River of Wells." This river was chiefly fed by Clerkenwell, Skinner's Well, and other springs in the northern suburb, where sundry mills belonging to the Knights Templars and other persons were worked by water power. It was called Turnmill Brook, till it received the water of the Old, or Hole Bourne,* and so went brawling, with much accelerated movement, past the Royal Prison—in Farringdon—where it took the name of *the Fleet*, the Saxon word for a navigable inlet. It flowed beneath a bridge of timber at the foot of Ludgate Hill, and passed the Palace of Bridewell, before it flashed into the Thames, having given its name to the broad straggling thoroughfare leading from the said Fleet Bridge to the Temple. This thoroughfare, the highway from the Tower and by Chepe to Westminster, was the resort of the aristocracy when the Court was in London, and the barons and nobles came home from the wars. The fashionable promenade was in the Temple and in the nave and aisles of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, the vast and magnificent building on the crown of Ludgate Hill, where a multitude of chantry priests officiated all day long, and the shrine of St. Erkenwald,

* Hole bourne, or stream in a hollow, same derivation as Holland (Hollow Land).

glowing with gold and gems—only more sumptuous than other shrines in the stupendous edifice—vied with the high altar itself in imposing splendour.

The great Cathedral occupied a larger area than that which is covered by the present building, and the eastern front and portico stood in a somewhat different position, being turned more towards the river and the gate of Lud, which opened in the City wall rather to the south-west.

Early in the fourteenth century many of the houses in Fleet Street were only mean tenements built of wood and plaster, with roofs of thatch or straw; but the frequent fires by which such structures were destroyed gave opportunities for improvement which are not enjoyed by our present sanitary authorities in dealing with more modern foul and dilapidated dwellings. By the end of the reign of Edward III. many houses in London streets were rebuilt with roofs of slates and tiles. They were still poor dwellings, many of them little better than hovels; but in the main streets the quaint and picturesque form of building, the high-pitched roof and gables, the projecting upper storeys, the open shops or stalls beneath, the rudiments of ornamental designs and traceries on the wooden or plaster fronts, the carved beams of timber, the quaintly-pictured sign-boards, gave colour and variety to a street more gay, varied, and picturesque than the present dingy and sordid thoroughfare.

Here and there were to be seen churches, notably those of St. Bridget and St. Dunstan, associated with

the houses of religious fraternities, such as the Dominicans and the Carmelites. Approached from the main thoroughfare by tributary streets and lanes were some of the spacious inns, or London mansions, of the bishops, barons, or nobles; for at that time "inn" meant dwelling, and the question, "Shall I not take mine ease at mine inn?" was to be interpreted, "Am I not to study my own comfort in my own house?" At the end of the highway of Fleet Street, near where the bar and balks of timber with chains crossing the roadway marked the boundary between City and County at Shire Lane, were the extensive buildings, the superb and solemn church, and the pleasant gardens extending to the river, which had lately formed the settlement of the famous Knights Templars. They had built this new abode after their removal from their older settlement in Holborne.

A KNIGHT TEMPLAR.

Near those earlier dwellings of the Templars were the Inn of the Bishop of Lincoln, and the Inn of the Furnivals, knights who went with Richard Cœur de Lion to Palestine. The old "Temple" in Holborne

was built soon after the foundation of the order of Knights Templars in 1118, and though no remnant of it is supposed to remain, it was not all pulled down till 1595. It is claimed by the proprietor of Wood's Hotel in Furnival's Inn, that a room in that establishment occupies the site of the chapel, and is partly formed of the last remaining portion of it. This room is still set apart for the morning and evening prayers that are, or were lately, observed there for the benefit of visitors to the hotel, which is seldom, if ever, without a clergyman among its guests.

The stately figures of the Templars ceased to appear in Fleet Street when their powerful, wealthy, and arrogant order was dissolved by the Papal edict, supporting the demands of those Sovereigns who were as much alarmed at the vast assumptions of independent authority by the Knights of the Red Cross, as they professed to be concerned at the alleged declension of moral and religious principles in that once pious order.

The community of the Templars was originally founded as a society of Soldiers of the Cross—professing poverty, chastity, humility, and devotion. It was both monastic and military in its rule, and its first objects — like those of the Order of the Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem—were the aid and relief of pilgrims to the Holy Land, and the defence of the sites of the Holy Sepulchre and the Temple after the first Crusade.

The "Hospitallers," or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, had been organised before the death of Godfrey de Bouillon, and in 1100 were attending sick pilgrims in the hospital which they had built, near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre erected by the Emperor Constantine. The dress distinguishing the Hospitallers was a black mantle with a white cross on the shoulder, and their first organiser was a French knight, Raymond Dupuy. In 1118 Hugo de Payens, with some knightly companions, founded the Order of the Temple, and while they faithfully kept their vow of poverty and owned nothing except in trust for the succour of the poor, they grew in wealth as well as in numbers and influence. Though they were meant to be, in a sense, a military order, the two founders, Hugo de Payens and Godfrey de St. Omer, had but one war-horse between them; and this was considered so emblematic of their poverty that the device of two armed knights riding on one horse became the seal and badge of the order; and remained such when the Templars had attained to such wealth and splendour that the arrogance of their chiefs became unbearable. At their institution, the members (in their priestly or monkish character) adopted the rule of the canons and monks of St. Augustine, who were also in Jerusalem. Their distinctive garb was a white mantle with a red cross on the shoulder. And as their courage was undaunted and their ambition boundless, they became, after a time, of as much importance as the Hospitallers. That the two orders should be bitterly opposed when they began to seek

wealth and power was, perhaps, inevitable. Certain it is that at length they came to open warfare, and numbers perished in a pitched battle fought to decide which was the stronger. The later failure of the Crusades, with the loss of those objects for which they were professedly undertaken, was largely to be attributed to the desperate conflicts of the two orders of knights of obedience, poverty, and humility. Doubtless the immense wealth of the Templars, their sumptuous dwellings and mode of living, added to their contemptuous repudiation of any subjection to external authority, led to the dissolution of the order and the seizure of their possessions.

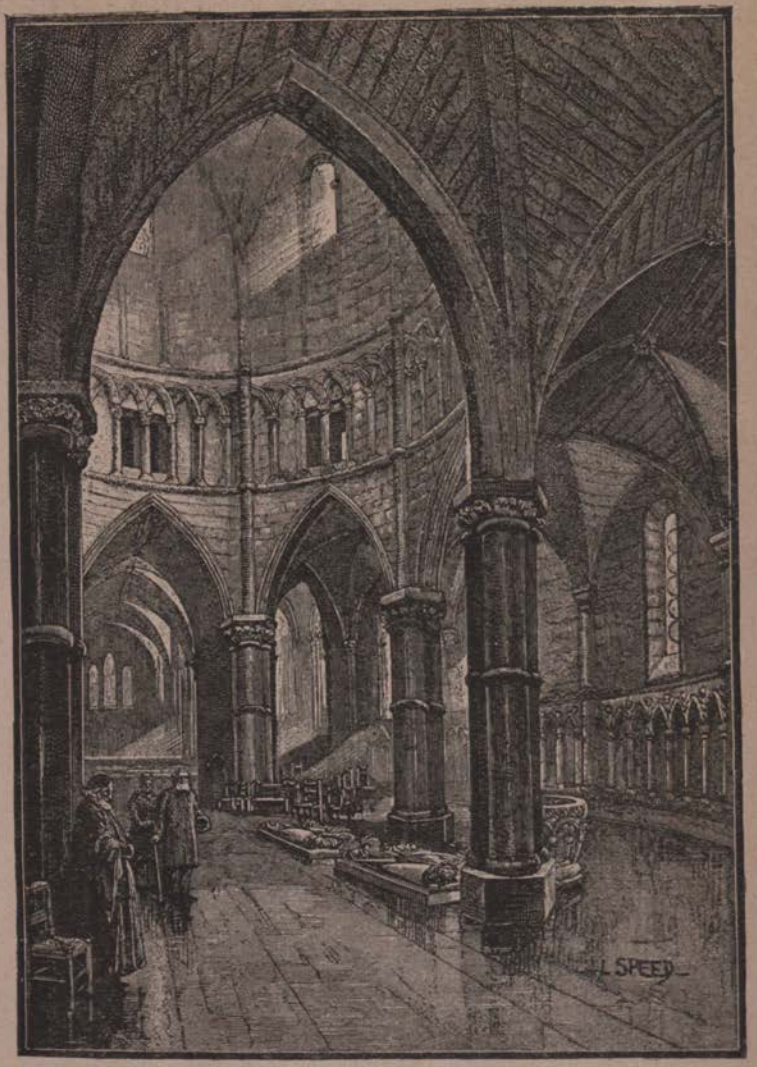
As old Fuller says, it may have been a case of burning the bees to get the honey, and certainly the Templars were accused of some crimes and profanities their commission of which was obviously incredible, if not absolutely impossible.

The torture and execution of the Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, and his officers and companions, in Paris, was the beginning of that suppression which lasted from 1307 to 1312, but it is claimed by the Masonic Order of Templars of the present day that the institution itself was real and could not be destroyed, though the enormous property was confiscated; that a successor to de Molay was at once appointed; and that nominations and installations have been continued to the present time. Among the names of the later Grand Masters are those of the Duke of Sussex and Admiral Sir Sidney Smith, the

present Grand Master being His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.*

In the stately and extensive buildings and the church which the Templars erected in the pleasant garden on the bank of the Thames in Fleet Street, and called "The New Temple," not only gold and jewels, but treasures from the world of letters were accumulated, treasures which a brotherhood with many learned members had collected in their library. The existing round church, or temple—really of octagonal shape, in the form of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem—was part of the first building erected in 1185, and over the door of the little cloister on the south side it was inscribed, in Saxon characters, that the building was dedicated by Heraclius, Patriarch of Jerusalem. The choir, a building of the Early English order of architecture, was not finished till 1240. The restorations that had become necessary in 1839—partly because of the depravity of taste which had overlaid the ancient ornamentations with plaster, whitewash, and wooden coverings—were thorough, and cost £70,000, but so much of the genuine character of the original Temple Church has been preserved (the more secular buildings having been destroyed by the insurgents under Wat Tyler and Jack Cade) that we can still imagine the scene of seven centuries ago—when in the

* An interesting and lively sketch of the institution, history and suppression of the order was recently published for private circulation by Col. George Lambert, F.S.A., Warden of the Regalia of the Order of Templars, and Member of that Order and of the Order of Masonic Knights Hospitallers.



ROTUNDA OF THE TEMPLE CHURCH.

"Round" Temple the knights met for religious service. The Templars' churches were of the same form at Cambridge, Northampton, and Maplestead, in Essex, where the order also had settlements, but not in their foundations at Bristol, Canterbury, Dover, and Warwick.

The important part taken in the Crusades by the Templars, and in fact the Crusades themselves, may be said to have ended with the return of Prince Edward from Palestine and his accession to the throne as Edward the First. Either the power of the Order of Templars had declined before he came to the throne, or he had as little fear or scruple with regard to it as he had in relation to any other assumed authority, for we find Prince Edward, on his return from Wales in 1263, going to the Temple with a number of armed followers, and, on the pretext of inspecting or removing some jewels, causing a coffer to be broken open, and taking away money and valuables representing £10,000, which would be equivalent to £80,000 or £100,000 at the present day.

It is not recorded that any explanation was given, or that the royal burglar apologised, but the people of London were so incensed that the populace broke into the houses of some of the courtiers and plundered them. The King, who was at the Tower, soon found that the citizens were prepared to support the barons, who resented his disregard of the oaths that he had made at Oxford to rule in accordance with the Charters.

As Edward the First gave little heed to the

claims of the Templars, it is not surprising that the vacillating Edward II. should have followed the lead of Philippe of France, by imprisoning the chiefs and dissolving the order, conferring their possessions on

THE ORIGINAL PRIORY CHURCH OF ST. JOHN, CLERKENWELL.

his favourite, Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke. At the Earl's death the property of the Templars and the great settlement in Fleet Street were conferred on their predecessors and rivals, the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, whose priory and house near the City were at St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, and whose cognisance, the lamb and flag, is still to be seen at the Temple, along with the rival badge of two knights on one horse.

The Hospitallers leased the Inner and Middle Temples to the students at common law, who made a

community there, as the Serjeants-at-law had done at Serjeants' Inn, in what had been "New Street" till the latter part of the reign of Henry III., when it was re-named Chancellors, or Chancery, Lane. It is to be

THE OLD "TABARD" INN. *(From a sketch taken shortly before its demolition.)*

noted that even at that date the more important buildings, and some few houses, were built of brick or faced with stone. Some portions of the walls of the old buildings of the Temple, which were of brick, seem to have survived till a late date, for in 1666 they stopped the fire of London from spreading further. Before that time Spenser, who had probably often heard the chimes at midnight with Raleigh in Fleet Street, wrote—

> "Those bricky towers
> The which on Thames' broad aged back doe ride,
> Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers."

Serjeants' Inn, as we have seen, had been established before the Temple was appropriated to the law students, for in fact the Serjeants-at-law, who also exercised some judicial functions, took their name from the *Frères Serjens*, or *Fratres servientes*—

CHAUCER AS A PILGRIM.*

serving brethren of the Order of the Templars—whence comes the "learned brother" in their mode of addressing each other.

The building next to Serjeants' Inn, in Chancellor's Lane, was a house which formerly belonged

* This and the succeeding illustrations of the "Canterbury Tales" are from the Ellesmere MS. of Chaucer.

to a Jew, from whom it was taken as a forfeit by Henry III. in 1233. Whether that not very scrupulous Sovereign had some prickings of conscience about the transaction cannot be determined, but, perhaps in an access of pious zeal, or for the more ready accumulation of forfeits from other obstinate Hebrews, he converted the Jew's house into an asylum "for converted Jews and infidels," who were comfortably maintained there, and had a church built for them; "whereby it came to pass," to quote the words of the old chronicler, "that in short time there were gathered a great number of converts, which were baptised, instructed in the doctrine of Christ, and there lived under a learned Christian appointed to govern them. This house of the converts began to lack inhabitants in the next reign, for in 1290 Edward the First banished all the Jews, and they were driven from the country with such cruelty and injustice that few were left to be converted, and Edward the Third then converted the Jew's house into the house and office of William Burstall, Clarke, the first *custos rotulorum*" (Master or Keeper of the Rolls, or records of Chancery). The house then took the name of "The Rolls," and the street that of Chancery Lane. The Church became a Chapel of the Rolls, and though it had been greatly altered and "adapted" on several occasions, some portions of the old building have been preserved. It is recorded by Stowe that relief and assistance were afforded to any converted Jews or infidels who applied at the Rolls house long after its transformation, and it has been cited as a remarkable

instance of modern progress and the mutability of human affairs, that in our time one of the most learned and distinguished Masters was Sir George Jessel, a member of the Jewish community.

Speaking of Stew and ancient chroniclers reminds us that Fleet Street has been associated with the literature of the country, at all events ever since William Fitzstephen, before the end of the twelfth century, wrote his description of "the most noble City of London." That description was a preface to his "Life of Thomas à Beckett," to whom he was Confidential Clerk, and at whose murder he was present.

It is to be remembered that in the train and Court of the Sovereign, and in the retinues of princes, barons, and noblemen, who lived in the castles and inns between the Tower and Westminster, and rode with their following up and down Fleet Street, amidst the clank and jingle of arms and the glitter of steel and gold—were poets, chroniclers, minstrels, song-writers, romancists, and translators, who held their part in the world of action and authority as well as in the world of letters.

For there *was* a "world of letters"—a bright and beautiful world of thought and high imagining, which expanded in scope and influence from the time when —a thousand years before Milton was born—the peasant-poet, Cædmon, sang in the hall of Whitby Abbey of the Creation and Paradise Lost, till that later date—still before the metal type had superseded the copyist's pen—when Dante, Petrarch and

Boccaccio in Italy, and Gower, Langland and Geoffrey Chaucer in England, moved the admiration of the learned, and powerfully stirred the hearts of the unlettered.

THE MAN OF LAW.

To Chaucer especially belonged the fame of poems and stories through which still blows the fresh air of an English May. Chaucer's verse fixed and preserved the standard of the English language, and gave to successive generations pictures of early English life and character which have never been surpassed, and were only equalled by those of William Shakespeare, two hundred years afterwards.

Let us stand with Chaucer and his friend John Gower on Fleet Bridge, where we may also meet the author of "Piers Plowman," as he comes from that other bridge by the water-gate of the great palace of

Bridewell, "in old times the king's house where the courts were kept." Here we may catch the aspect of frequenters of the Highway of Letters in the latter

THE WIFE OF BATH.

part of the reign of Edward III., or before the abdication of Richard II; and may recognise some of the pilgrims who set out from the Tabard, in Southwark, to visit the shrine of à Beckett, at Canterbury.

Even "mine host of the Tabard," fit to be a Marshal in a hall—merry and wise—who takes his seat, as mine host should, at the table with his guests, to entertain them with "victuals of the best" and generous wine, and to contribute his share of lively but sober conversation, is typical of the two sturdy

men walking together across the street, clad in tunics of "cloth of ray," or striped cloth, and with beaver hats from Flanders, worn over their hoods or "capuchons."

They have come from the Vintry, where they have been sampling wine at a merchant's house in Dowgate Lane—perhaps at the house of the successor of Chaucer's father, who, we understand, was a vintner and a "boteler" (bottler), or purveyor of wine to King Edward the Third.

His son, the great English poet—born at that house in the Vintry—became one of the royal pages, and after following the King to the wars, was entrusted with important missions in France and in Italy, where he journeyed out of his way to visit "Francis Petrarch, the laureat poet, at Padua."

It was the Oxford Clerk who told the tale related to him by the learned Clerk of Padua. There he is, on his way to Westminster, for he has come to London to see a friend. His threadbare coat, his lean, lank figure, even his horse, "lean as a rake," betoken the ecclesiastic without a benefice—the man of books and serious, simple character, who will "gladly learn and gladly teach," but has none of that self-seeking wisdom which is devoted to getting on in the world.

A strange contrast to this worthy man, whose speech is short, quick, and highly reverential, may be seen in the monk who is riding yonder on a good horse, with gaily-ornamented bridle and housings, so that as he ambles along the harness jingles in the wind as clear as a chapel bell. His hood is fastened

under his chin with a gold pin, the head of which is in the form of a love-knot; the sleeves of his gown are edged with costly fur, and his ruddy face shines as though it had been anointed with oil. He is a forward member of the Hunt; and it must be remembered that ecclesiastics do not necessarily wear canonical attire except when officiating. Here are two of the Chantry priests from St. Paul's coming this way, one of whom wears a green tunic edged with fur and scarlet hose (or tight pantaloons and stockings in one), a girdle richly gilt, and a cap of beaver which covers his tonsure. His companion wears the canonical gown and hood of scarlet. The friars, black, white and grey, and especially the mendicants, are more ecclesiastical in dress, particularly those who belong to the severer orders, which that sly, wanton-looking fellow yonder does not. He begs his way—that is, he lives on the hospitality of those whose doors are ever open to him, and at whose tables he eats and drinks of the best they have; and whether it be venison or warden pie, washed down with good wine, or the humbler beef and ale, "lives a good life because he lives well." Notice his comfortable double-worsted cope, and his "tippet," or long hanging sleeve, full of pins and knives, for presents to the comely women whom he confesses, and the girls who listen to his honeyed admonitions. This is one of the friars whom Wycliffe denounces; and Chaucer, who holds much of the doctrine of the great Reformer, and shares his opinions about friars, speaks less harshly of this insidious

rogue than we might have expected. Perhaps the jovial and free-living stroller, with all his vices, is to be preferred to the sumpnour (summoner)—or official accuser of those suspected of heresy

THE SQUIRE.

and other offences—that fiery-faced, pimpled, and foul-breathed creature, who takes bribes and uses his official authority for the worst purposes. On his head is a garland large enough for an ale-house sign, and he carries a big cake as though it were a buckler, for he is on a journey, and is used to heavy feeding and snacks between meals. By his side is a pardoner, or seller of dispensations. He has just come from Rome, and carries indulgences,

absolutions, and pretended relics of alleged miraculous efficacy. An unsavoury pair these—let them go, for, old as he is now, our friend Chaucer's blood is quick, and it is said to be on record in the case-book at the Temple that his dislike of friars once led him into an altercation with one in his neighbourhood, which ended in his beating his antagonist, but whether in argument or at fisticuffs it boots not to enquire too closely, though it is rumoured that the poet had to pay a fine.

More worthy of notice is the doctor of physic, who has been to Lamb-hithe (Lambeth) to the bishop's library, and is credited with knowing more about the influence of the stars than about medicine. His suit of red Persian silk is lined with taffeta and "sendal," a thin silk fabric named after the river Indus or "Sindu"—whence it was first brought.

The serjeant-at-law, with his scarlet gown and white hood, both edged with lamb-skin fur, his silken-striped girdle, his silken coif (the mark of his legal rank) tied beneath the chin, is on his way to St. Paul's, where he takes his stand at a pillar in the great portico, there to meet clients who bring their cases to him. Thither also go this party of law students from the Temple, to take part in those debates in which they learn to "put cases" for discussion. These meetings are called "*Boltus Mootes*" (bolting meetings)—for by them the students learn to "bolt the meal from the chaff" in argument.

Chaucer's serjeant attends the *mootes*, held, as we have said, in the portico of the Cathedral, which is

called "Paradise," the ancient architectural term for a piazza or covered walk being "*Paradisus*"—while "*Parvise*" is a church porch. The Oxford disputations are "*disputationes in Parviso*," and it is possible that Chaucer may have taken part in them, though we know not for certain whether he was either at Oxford or Cambridge University, except that he is a man of learning as well as a man of genius. His acquirements, commencing in one of the London schools founded by some wealthy trader, make him a citizen of the world, a master of current knowledge; and he has been soldier, traveller, courtier, and always a keen observer and student of human nature and human character.

His bold simplicity of language, his charming fancy, his cheerful, healthy views of life and society, attune his acquaintance with art and letters to a familiar and welcome note. His appearance, too, accords with his manly bearing and high attainments, for as we stand here his well-knit, though now somewhat portly, figure, his fair, flowing hair, his keen, humorous eye and beautiful radiant face, attract the attention of many a passer-by.

Is this dignified, sweet and delicate prioress, in her cloak and garb of the Benedictine order, the Lady Eglantine of Chaucer's verse? She is accompanied by her chaplain, who is a nun, and by two priests, and they are riding into the City either to visit the Minchuns (or nuns) of Minchun Lane, the Priory of St. Helen, Bishopsgate, or to the Abbey of St. Clare, in the Minories, founded by Edward of Lancaster,

Leicester and Derby, brother of the King (Edward the Third).

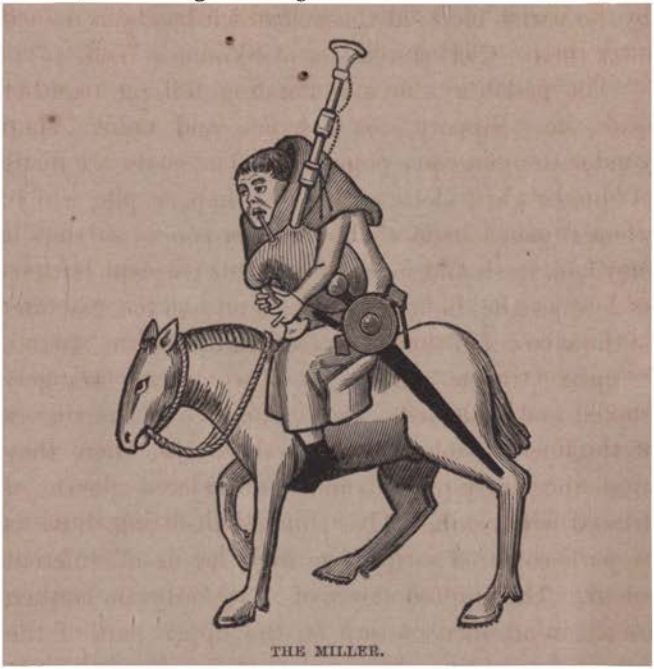
The "very perfect gentle knight," who has done deeds of high valour and chivalry in the foreign wars, and yet is "meek as a maid," and speaks evil to none, reins in his horse that the prioress and her attendants may precede him. His fustian cassock is somewhat soiled by contact with his suit of mail, for he has just come home from foreign service. His garb, in its simplicity, contrasts strangely with the more fashionable attire of the gallant young squire, his son, whose short, tight-fitting jacket, or "cote-hardie," with loose hanging sleeves, is embroidered with flowers red and white, so that it resembles a meadow in spring. The youth wears his hair long, and carefully pressed into accurate curls, and he possesses many accomplishments—can dance, make songs and sing them, play the flute, and probably the gittern, or guitar, also. He is as active as a deer, but, better than all, he is as respectfully attentive to his father as their retainer the yeoman is—that yeoman with the "nut-head" and forester's green hood and jerkin, the badge of St. Christopher on his breast, a horn by his side, and his bow and peacock-plumed arrows ready for use.

This young squire's dress is not of the extreme fashion, which is so extravagant that the Commons have petitioned that the lower classes and those of moderate means shall be restrained from aping their betters. There is, however, a glow of brilliant colour and a sheen of sarcenet (Saracen silk), cloth of gold, jewelled caps, belts, sword hilts and bedizened bridles

and housings for the horses, when a Royal procession or a company of knights and barons go to the joustings at Smithfield, or to witness a mystery play performed by the parish clerks at the well which has been named after them—Clerkenwell—or at Skinner's Well.

The gallants who are standing talking together near the "frippery," or mercer's and tailor's shop yonder, are gorgeous popinjays. The coats are made of blue or white cloth, with a long nap, or pile, which, when it gets a little shabby, can be *shorn*, so that it may look fresh and new again. This garment buttons as low as the hips, and the loose sleeves, reaching to the elbow, fall thence, almost trailing on the ground, in open "tippets," the edges of which are strangely pinked and scalloped. Below the elbows the sleeves of the linen doublet button to the wrists, where they meet the finely-purfled and embroidered gloves, of dressed sheepskin. The thin, tight-fitting hose is in parti-coloured stripes, or each leg is of different colour. The pointed shoes, of soft Cordovan leather, are slit in an open pattern on the upper part of the feet. Some of them have points of inordinate length, the toes reaching upward towards the knee. These are called "Cracowes," and were introduced by the Bohemian students from Cracow, who came here to study at the Universities, and some of whom have carried home the tenets and opinions of Wycliffe, which have been taken up by leaders of a reformation of religion in Germany and Switzerland. The coverings for the head are Flanders caps and feathers, or hoods buttoned to the chin and furnished at the crown with long tails

(liripipes), which are wrapped round the head above the ears. A cloak, embroidered with silk and silver thread, and large enough to cover the wearer, is



THE MILLER.

gathered on the left shoulder, where it buttons to the cote-hardie like a cape; or a silken-hooded cloak (paletoque) falls in more voluminous folds. A silken girdle, or a belt with golden buckle, holds the gypcerie, or pouch, in which is a knife used for cutting the food at table.

Note the contrast of the plain coat and hood of the bullet-headed miller, famous in fight and fair, who comes jogging along with broadsword and bag-

pipe under his arm. Note also the difference between the buxom self-indulgent wife of Bath and the ladies to whom these noble youths bow to the ground, and who wear embroidered cote-hardies, or jackets of fine cloth, kirtles of sendal, and rich tunics trimmed with grey fur. Some of them seem to prefer a sleeveless jacket in place of the cote-hardie. Their skirts are extended by dress-improvers made of foxes' tails; their girdles are of gold tissue, their gypceries of decorated leather; the head-dress is either the *capuchon* or a round cap of velvet. The hair of most of them is either naturally of yellow hue or is dyed to that colour with saffron, and is gathered under a net of gold wire.

The feminine head-gear is so changeful, however, that an extinguisher-shaped peak, slanting back from the crown of the head and furnished with streamers, is coming into fashion, while some great ladies wear a tiara, shaped like a new moon, with the horns upward, or a kind of coronet with a circular lappet stiffly distended from each temple.

Much simpler is the appearance of the serving-woman standing at the door of a house yonder, with stout laced shoes, ample "barm-cloth," or apron, and a cap of linen, frilled or pleated so that it stands out round the head. The labourer, or rustic, who is speaking to her, as he leans with his arm across the neck of the horse that he is leading, is coarsely clothed in fustian coat and rough woollen hose. At home he wears a "bliaus" (blouse) of blue, and wears a rough cap, or "hure," upon his head. The grave and

dignified franklin, or freeholder, a friend of Chaucer and a sheriff in his own county, has come to London on law business, and rides along slowly, his fresh face and beard "white as a daisy," his red coat lined with blue, and ornamented with stripes of lace or fringe. Of him it is said that—

> "Withouten baked meat never was his house;
> Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteous,
> It snowëd in his house of meat and drink."

The merchant who is coming this way from East Chepe wears a surcoat figured with red and blue flowers, and an imposing Flanders beaver on his head and handsomely-clasped boots on his feet. He stops to speak to an acquaintance, a wealthy citizen, and member of the great guild of "Pepperers," or Grocers, who appears in coat and surcoat of gorgeous hue and a furred gown, bearing on its front a camel, the emblem of his company.

He will ask the merchant to dinner to-morrow, and these City magnates know how to dine, though the recent restrictions exclude more than a certain number of dishes and forbid extravagance in venison. The annalists, from Fitzstephen downwards, who have walked in this Highway of Letters, have declared the pests of London to be the "immoderate drinking of fools and the frequency of fires"; but the grave and hospitable governors of the City Companies have some discretion, and the "Pepperers" know the quality of their wine.

We may see with what distinction Craftsmen of the Guilds appear, by the group of men now coming

out of Shoe Lane on their way from Holborne Bridge. They are all clad in the varied livery of their guilds, and make a brave show. Their knives have handles of wrought silver, and they wear the ornaments or emblems of their companies. Our poet admires them as men fit to sit in high hall and likely to become aldermen, and tells us that each of their wives expects to be addressed as "Madam"; for they are wealthy men, and can hold their own at board or council.

THE FRIAR.

The laws restraining gluttony limit servants and the "lower orders" to plain eating, and to what are regarded as moderate potations of new ale, rather grouty in quality, particularly sweet, and, as one of the lacqueys in the King's Court complains, often tasting of the droppings of the candles that fall into the wooden biggins or metal flagons.

Country gentlemen, like the franklins, regard a certain rude plenty as indispensable, and the variety of plain dishes are for hearty eaters; but here in Fleet Street, where "mine host" of the Horn or the Falcon caters for distinguished visitors, there is a *cuisine* borrowed from the French. Our dinner hour is ten o'clock, so that we are ready for a third meal, which we call supper, in the evening, and for

our "liveries," or snacks, before going to bed; said snacks consisting of a good allowance of bread, a slice or two of meat, and a large draught of wine. If we dine in company—at a large table, where the salt-cellar in the middle is the chief ornament—our wooden or metal platters will be kept going for an hour or two, our silver spoons and metal forks will make no small clatter; and though it is the fashion to have the beef and mutton served in "gobbets," or small pieces, and most of our other viands are in the nature of spoon-meat, yet for those plain eaters who prefer them there are joints of beef, pork, mutton, or venison, chines of bacon and collars of brawn; but these are mostly little more than adjuncts to give dignity to the feast.

Most of us prefer to begin with pottage, called bukkenade, which is veal, fowl or rabbit, shred fine, and stewed with sugar, almonds, currants, ginger and cinnamon. If this is too much for us, there is "furmety," boiled wheat beaten with yolks of eggs in broth or milk. There are so many fast-days that fish is not much eaten at feasts, but there is a good dish of it for Fridays, consisting of turbot, tench, eels, pike and others, minced small, stewed, and mixed with spice, pepper, vinegar and wine. Plain eaters may try slices of porpoise brayed with almonds, but it is rather a strong and rich dish.

Chaucer says that a good judge of brewing prefers London ale to any other, but at dinner we have wine from Gascony or the Rhine; or if we like it sweet, there are those called "bastard" wines, and

known as Claire and Vernage. We have no more taste for old wine than for old ale, and the newer it is the more we drink of it.

The next course is of "mortrewes" and "blanc desires." The former is named after the mortress, or mortar, in which the ingredients are brayed with a pestle. They consist of chickens, pork, bread and eggs, beaten to a pulp, and well spiced and seasoned with herbs, and sometimes with fruits. These mortrewes are mostly coloured yellow, red or black, with saffron, sandal-wood or burnt blood, while the blanc-desire of the brawn, or flesh of capons, pounded with almonds and rice flour or fine wheaten flour, is pure white, and is regarded as a marvellously nourishing dish.

For another course there are fillets of venison, partridges parboiled, and then larded, roasted and sprinkled with ginger. A course of "egrets," or young herons, is esteemed; and we have wild duck, roast goose, and even cygnet, besides dishes of game, if the dinner be one of state; vegetables (served separately) are pease minced with onions, vinegar, salt and saffron; our "salats" are parsley, cress, rosemary, rue, mint and fennel, with salt, oil and vinegar. The sweets are custards of flawn, or a mixture of cream, butter, and eggs, ground up with apples, currants, white bread and spices, cooked in a "coffin," or crust of paste. "Spinee" is a mixture of pounded almonds, rice and milk, flavoured with the hawthorn flower, which gives it its name, while "Rosee" is a similar compound, with the savour of white roses.

If the dinner is a special one, the cook will have

sent up a "subtlety," or ingenious design, representing some historical or mythical scene or event, and made of pastry and confectionery, but otherwise we must be contented to pass on to "fritures," or fritters of figs, ground with spices, covered with a thin crust of paste, and fried in honey. Tarte de Brie is made of cheese from Brie, eggs, sugar and spice. "Macrowes" consists of Italian maccaroni with grated cheese, and with these we finish the repast; after which a bumper of spiced wine, called Hippocras, will settle our digestion.

Chaucer was often at royal feasts and sat at great men's tables, for he was a trusted companion of John of Gaunt, the great Duke of Lancaster, and of Lionel, Duke of Clarence. The poet was a prisoner in France in the early days when he fought at the siege of Retters, and was captured by the enemy; and at a later date, in England, he was arrested and sent to the Tower for having taken part against the Court in those civil and religious troubles which, rightly or wrongly, were associated with the supporters of the doctrines of Wycliffe. It was with much difficulty, and the loss of some of those pensions and public appointments which had been granted to him for his services, and to enable him to devote his later days to the advancement of learning, that he was released from prison. His own complaint of his humiliation, in his prose work, "The Testament of Love," is powerful and affecting enough to show how much he suffered; but a man who had been the friend of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, and was still the friend of John, the great Duke of

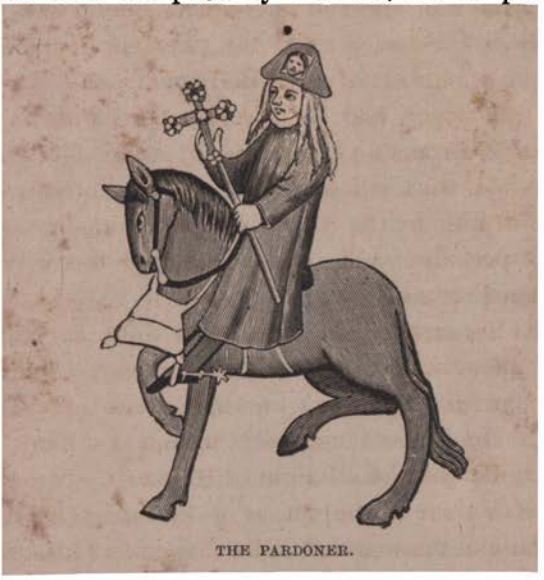
Lancaster, and of his young son, Harry of Bolingbroke, was not likely to be kept long in durance.

But when he was released he was comparatively poor. He had previously been deprived of his office of Comptroller of the Customs of Wine and Wool in the Port of London, part of the payment for which had been a pitcher of wine daily from the King's table, a gift which had been commuted for its value in money. He was now deprived of other offices and pensions, so that, till a portion of the latter were restored to him by the King's favour, he was in sorry plight, especially while his wealthy protector was away from England.

When his early friend and patron, John of Gaunt, married Blanche, the heiress of Lancaster, Chaucer commemorated the event in his poem of "The Dream." He himself married Philippa Pyckard, or de Rouet, daughter of a knight of Hainault. She was a maid of honour to the Queen of Edward III., after whom she had been named. Her sister was Catherine Swynford, widow of Sir John Swynford. The relations of the Duke with Catherine Swynford had been too intimate before the death of his second wife, Constance of Castile, and after that event she became his third wife, and her children were legitimised.

As a lad of fifteen Chaucer had seen one of the bravest spectacles ever witnessed in Fleet Street, when the Black Prince brought his prisoners, the French King John and the young Prince Philip, to England, after the victory at Poitiers. The exquisite courtesy of Prince Edward, who rode upon a palfrey

while his captives were mounted on chargers and carried their arms, made it a procession of honour for the noble foe, even among the multitude who witnessed their reception by Edward, not as prisoners



THE PARDONER.

but as guests, at the sumptuous palace of the Savoy in the Strand, which became the property of the Duke of Lancaster.

It was in the army led by King Edward to France for enforcing the payment of the ransom promised for the liberation of John, the captive guest, that Chaucer first bore arms. He was then a youth of seventeen, and he continued to serve in the wars for twenty-seven years.

It is possible that he was in foreign service with Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the third son of Edward,

and elder brother of Lancaster. This prince, who married a daughter of the Duke of Milan, died in Piedmont in 1368, and it was he who, when he was in London, kept state at Baynard's Castle on Thames Bank, near the house of the Black Friars, and between Bridewell and the precinct of the King's Wardrobe. This castle had taken its name from Baynard, one of the barons who came to England with Duke William of Normandy; but in the reign of John it had passed into the hands of Fitzwalter, one of the descendants of the great family of the Earls of Clare. He was custodian and banner-bearer to the City of London, and one of the most prominent of the barons who, in the name of the City, insisted on the King's acceptance of the Great Charter.

Not far from Baynard's Castle, and the site of the former castle of Montfichet, the church and house of the Dominican or Black Friars had long been established, and their house was of so much importance that parliaments were often held there. This order of "preaching friars" seems to have included the more literate of the monastic body, and their superior influence lasted until the suppression of the monasteries, so that we find the Emperor Charles the Fifth lodging in their house beyond Ludgate, when he came on a visit to Henry the Eighth in 1522. Seven years afterwards, in the great hall of the same building, was held the so-called trial by which Henry sought to establish his claim to a divorce from Queen Catharine.

The prison for debtors, and for heretics or "Lollards," as the followers of Wycliffe were called, was at

Ludgate, close to the little church of St. Gregory, a parish church standing, as was said, in the elbow of St. Paul; and the Black Friars took a prominent part in those accusations which led to the summoning of Wycliffe, at the instance of Pope Gregory, to attend at the Cathedral to answer for his heresy before the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London.

The account of the scene at the Cathedral has been preserved in Fox's "Acts and Monuments," and shows with what entire disregard of the authority of the Pope and the bishops the Duke took up the cause of the Reformers, whose views he seems to have openly defended.

Wycliffe went to the Cathedral, accompanied not only by John of Gaunt, but by Lord Percy, Marshal of England. These two noblemen must have been demonstrative, for at the commencement of the proceedings the Bishop of London said, "If I could have guessed, Lord Percy, that you would have played the master here, I would have prevented you coming." This was an implied threat, to which the proud Duke of Lancaster replied, "Yes, he shall play the master here for all you." And Lord Percy thereupon turned to Wycliffe, and said, "Wycliffe, sit down! You have need of a seat, for you have many things to say."

"It is unreasonable," retorted the Bishop, "that a clergyman cited before his ordinary should sit during his answer. He shall stand!"

"My Lord Percy, you are in the right," cried the

Duke; and then, turning to the Bishop, "And for you, my Lord Bishop, you are grown so proud and arrogant, I will take care to humble your pride; and not only yours, my Lord, but that of all the prelates in England. Thou dependest upon the credit of thy relations, but so far from being able to help thee, they shall have enough to do to support themselves."

"I place no confidence in my relations," retorted the Bishop, "but in God alone, who will give me the boldness to speak the truth."

The Duke of Lancaster here turned, and said in a half-whisper to Lord Percy, "Rather than take this at the Bishop's hands, I will drag him by the hair of his head out of the Court."

This was a pretty quarrel as it stood, and it was not discreet of John of Gaunt to threaten Bishop Courtenay; for, though his relations may not have been able to aid him, the citizens of London were. It was soon afterwards said that the people of the City were mostly Lollards, but they had grave suspicions that Lancaster was aiming at the throne. The Black Prince, who had been the people's idol, was dead, the old warrior king had grown feeble, and was never happy while he was out of the company of Alice Perrers, the beautiful and designing woman who had been a maid of honour to the late Queen Philippa; and it was suspected that John of Gaunt was planning to prevent the accession of young Richard, the son of the Black Prince.

This and the arrogance of Lancaster were

probably the chief reasons for the indignation expressed by the Londoners at the treatment of their bishop. They may have liked Wycliffe much, but they hated Lancaster more, and an opportunity soon occurred which enabled them to manifest their resentment against Lord Percy and the Duke. The former, as Lord Marshal, had illegally, and in defiance of privilege, caused a popular citizen, one John de la Mere, to be arrested and imprisoned in the Marshalsea; whereupon a number of riotous Londoners went to the Marshal's house, and, not finding him there, partly pulled down the building. Remembering that they also had a score to settle with the Duke of Lancaster, the Lord Marshal's friend, they returned across the river, and hurried along Fleet Street to the Duke's palace of the Savoy, in which they fancied that the Marshal had taken refuge. Here they demanded that he should be given up; and an unfortunate priest coming out to remonstrate with them, and indiscreetly saying that the man who had been imprisoned was a traitor, the mob declared that the priest was the Lord Marshal in disguise, and summarily knocked him on the head and killed him.

A report of the violence of the rioters reached the Bishop of London, who went forth with his attendants, and by earnest entreaty and persuasion induced the mob to refrain from further depredations; but they had been ready for any mischief, and probably were glad of an excuse to attack the Duke of Lancaster. They had already begun to demolish his

palace of the Savoy, to make havoc of its fine rooms, its costly library, and stately furniture, the Duke himself being out dining in the City. They gained little by their violence, however, though the riot was so alarming that an insurrection was feared, and the commotion reached to the very doors of Parliament. One of the last audiences given by the great Edward III. was at his palace at Shene, to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London, who were persuaded by the Princess of Wales, widow of the Black Prince, to submit themselves to the Duke, and to crave pardon for their grievous offence. The citizens were enjoined to choose another mayor and aldermen; but the opposition to the Duke of Lancaster continued to be manifested. On the death of Edward, a deputation of the wealthiest and most powerful of the City magnates rode over to the old royal palace at Kennington to visit the widow of the late Prince of Wales and her son Richard, who resided there.

The boy was not yet eleven years old, and his personal beauty was the boast of the Londoners, who were ready to worship him because of the memory of his father. John of Gaunt, therefore, who was rightly or wrongly supposed to be ready to supplant him, was more unpopular than ever, and neither he nor any of his brothers (the late king's sons) were made regents, or placed by the barons among the twelve permanent councillors.

The Duke took matters calmly enough, and retired to his castle at Kenilworth, and then, as

titular King of Castile, got together a fleet and did a little piracy and filibustering on the English coast. But we are drifting more than a cable's length from the Highway of Letters, the fashionable resort at the western end of the City.

LYDGATE CONTEMPLATING THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE. (*From Richard Pynson's edition of "The Fall of Princes,"* 1513.)

CHAPTER II.

VOX CLAMANTIS IN FLEET STREET.

The Strand—Char-Ing Cross—Wycliffe's Writings—The Translation of the Bible—Effect on Letters—"Vox Clamantis"—Langland—"Piers Plowman"—Papal Authority—Wat Tyler—Insurgents in Fleet Street—Wreck of the Temple Buildings—Ruin of the Savoy—The "Moral Gower"—The "Philosophical Strode"—Gower and the Young King—"Confessio Amantis"—Henry of Lancaster—Gibbet and Stake in Fleet Street—St. Dunstan's—White Friars—Conduits—Fewter Lane—John Lydgate—Revival of English Literature—Occleve—Pecock—Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester—Outdoor Sports—Football in Fleet Street—Shire Lane—The Maypole near Temple Bar—"London Lyckpenny"—John Harding—Thomas Fabyan—John Shirley.

Beyond the Temple were the palace of the Savoy and mansions, which stood on the north bank or strand of the Thames, their fronts to the river, and their pleasant gardens leading to the water gates and landing stages, where state barges and galleys, with gilt and

carven prows and gorgeous canopies, waited for the rowers to convey bishops and nobles along the silent highway to Westminster, Lambhithe, Bridewell, Belinsgate, or the Tower. On the north side of the Strand, beyond Temple Bar, nearly all was open country when Edward the First set up the cross to mark the last spot at which the body of his beloved Queen, Eleanor, rested on the funeral journey from Waltham Abbey to Westminster. The place then named Charing was not even a village, but a meadow. Char-Ing means Char Meadow, and the name remained when it became a small village in the midst of open fields. Perhaps it was a field or meadow in which wood was burnt in pits to convert it into char-coal for fuel. It is certainly not derived from "*Chère Reine*," as some romancists would have us believe, for it was named Char-Ing at an earlier period than that of the death of Eleanor.

What an interesting train must have passed along Fleet Street on that slow sad journey! There was no regular causeway, no road divided from the foot-way in Fleet Street, except, perhaps, by a few rough wooden posts. In the Strand the horse-road was worse than any now to be seen in England, nor was there any great improvement made for many years afterwards.

Fleet Street and its vicinity had shown credentials for being called "the Highway of Letters" before Wycliffe and his companions disappeared from the scene. The great reformer had begun to write pamphlets, commentaries, and tracts, in English instead of

in Latin; and their number was considerable. They found their way into the Temple and other inns of law, and were read, not only by students, but by numbers of laymen, who were awakening to that cry for amendment in the Church and in the Court to which Gower was soon to give amazing strength and emphasis in his "*Vox Clamantis*" (Voice of One Crying), and to which Langland had before given fearless and unmistakable expression in his allegorical poem of "Piers Plowman." But the great event of the time was the completion of the translation of the Bible into English by Wycliffe and the men of piety and learning who were his co-workers.

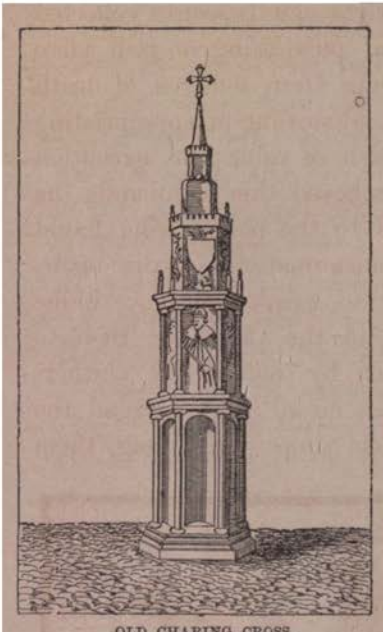
In 1360 there was no part of the Scriptures in the language of the people except the Psalter and some misleading paraphrases or metrical books. Now, by beginning with the Gospels, consecutive portions of the Sacred Word began to appear, translated with studious labour and research by the Reformer and his companions, until, in 1380, the work was accomplished, and (including the Apocryphal books) the whole body of Scripture was open to those of the laity who could read it in their own language.

The citation of the reformer to appear at St. Paul's Cathedral was followed in 1382 by his banishment from the University, for he had boldly called in question those doctrines which the Black Friars regarded as tests of orthodoxy. His followers, too, were attacked, and many of them were sent to Lambeth Palace, and there immured in the chamber still known as the "Lollards' Prison." Two years later Wycliffe

was summoned to appear before the Pope himself. It is doubtful whether he would have obeyed the summons, for the legal authority of the Pope even to issue such a command had been denied long before, and his power to enforce it would never have been admitted, especially as there were two Popes, a schism in the Church having caused the recognition of a French as well as an Italian Papacy. But Wycliffe's labour was done, and he was passing to his rest. He had given to his countrymen a Bible in their own language, invaluable for their instruction in the articles of Christian faith, and of undoubted benefit as a standard of scholarly but current English. By the end of the year the great Reformer, who was suffering from paralysis, passed to the land of peace.

Before Gower wrote his famous poem, the *Vox Clamantis* had been raised in wild and startling tones by the followers of Wat Tyler, a fierce insurgent multitude, pouring along the Highway of Letters to the grand and extensive buildings of the Temple, and thence to the superb palace of the Savoy. Whether Chaucer saw the entry of the insurgents to Fleet Street is not known. That Gower may have seen it is probable, for he was, perhaps, living at that time in Southwark, at the Priory of St. Mary Overy, to the rebuilding of which he gave considerable sums of money. He may have heard the tramp of the vast army of peasants marching to London Bridge, from Essex, Kent, and Sussex, to represent, as they declared, "the Commons of England." The hundred thousand men encamped on Blackheath on the 11th

of June, 1381, under the leadership of Wat Tyler of Dartford, John Ball of Maidstone, and Jack Straw of Brentwood, were not a horde of robbers, murderers and scoundrels, though a great number of them were villains—for the word villain meant an agricultural slave or serf bound to the soil which he tilled, and liable to be sold or transferred with it to the next proprietor who might come into possession.



OLD CHARING CROSS.

We have all heard the story of the flight to London of the King's mother—once the Fair Maid of Kent—and of the insurgents suffering her and her ladies to pass their camp after taking toll in the shape of a few kisses. She safely reached the Tower, and thence took refuge in the King's Wardrobe, near Baynard's Castle. The history of those days of terror and bloodshed needs not to be repeated. The not unreasonable demands which formed the substance of the claim preferred by the insurgents; the slaying of Wat Tyler in Smithfield; the promise of the young King, and his treacherous breach of his royal word; the wreck of the Temple buildings; the

destruction of the priceless books and documents in its library; the furious sacking of the Savoy; the burning of the manuscripts and treasures collected there; the breaking and pulverising of rich plate and jewels; the insurgents' stern sentence of death on any who should be found stealing or appropriating even the most trifling article of value; the execution of one at least who disobeyed this command; the breach of it with regard to the potent wine found in the cellars; the transformation of the insurgents into rioters, ready to wreak vengeance indiscriminately; the return to the City; the rush to the wine-cellars, left open by traders and vintners to propitiate the drunken crowd, who dragged the foreign traders from their shops and hung them beneath their own signs—these events need only indicate the Highway of Letters strewed with the charred remnants of invaluable records, and costly reproductions of the best writings of poets, philosophers, historians, travellers, lawyers and divines; the water in the conduits or

WYCLIFFE. (*From Bale's "Centuries of British Writers,"* 1518.)

leaden cisterns tinged with blood; the earth trodden into deep holes by the trampling feet and mad strife of reeling men—all this Chaucer and Gower may have looked upon; and Gower may have seen the ending of the tragedy—the bodies of men to whom pardon had been promised swinging from gibbets in streets and on river-bank and country-side.

His country house was in Kent, and he also had some landed estate in Essex. He was, therefore, in the vicinity of the first rising under Wat Tyler, and it is probable that in the quietude of his country home there, he was visited, sleeping or waking, by the dream which, after the outbreak of the people and its terrors, took the form of the "*Vox Clamantis*."

The horrors of the plague followed the horrors that resulted from the insurrection, and for a time there was but a gloomy and terror-stricken aspect of society in London. Fleet Street was silent; the great palace of the Savoy was a heap of ruins, and lay neglected and unappropriated for more than a hundred years, when Henry VII. appointed the site for an endowed hospital, dedicated to John the Baptist, and for the relief of a hundred poor persons.

The condition of the country was so much like that attending civil war that there was little encouragement to literature, but during that doleful time the regard for each other of the two great poets, Chaucer and Gower, suffered no diminution. It had

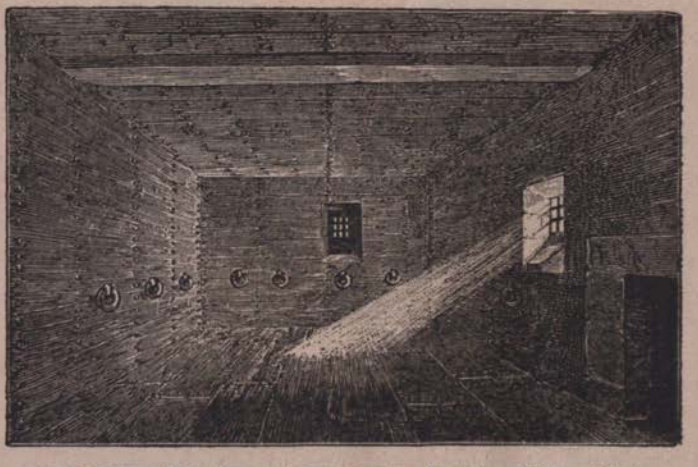
survived differences of opinion, as well it might, since both in their literary relations were actuated by the same motives—the advance of learning, the promotion of truth, and the improvement of society.

About twenty years earlier, Chaucer had dedicated his "*Troilus and Cressida*" to "The Moral Gower," evidently recognising the serious goodness as well as the genius of his friend.

> "O Moral Gower, this book I direct
> To thee, and to the philosophical Strode,
> To vouchsafe there need is to correct
> Of your benignities and zeale's good."

Whether Gower felt complimented by being bracketed with the "philosophical Strode" there are no means of knowing. Ralph Strode was a learned Dominican of Jedburgh Abbey, who had travelled in Europe and visited Palestine. He had a high reputation for philosophy, and he wrote verse, but neither his philosophy nor his verse has survived in England. The Dominicans were, no doubt, the most highly educated ecclesiastics of the time, and it has been thought that Strode was for a time tutor to one of Chaucer's sons. There can be no doubt that the friendship of the two poets continued till the death of Chaucer at the house which he occupied near St. Mary's chapel, at Westminster, on the site of the present chapel of Henry VII. They continued to be the chief representatives of English literature during that period. Both had the personal recognition of

Richard II., for they received substantial acknowledgment from him, though Gower, who needed help least, received a recognition more in accordance with his position and character than mere money gifts would have represented. He was appointed to the rectory of Braxted in Essex, in the neighbourhood of some



THE LOLLARDS' PRISON, LAMBETH PALACE (*p.* 42). (*From Allen's "History of Lambeth."*)

property which he owned in another parish. He was appointed rector, not as a priest, for he was not ordained, but as a clerk; and as a clerk he retired in his old age to a lodging in the priory of St. Mary Overy, to which he had been a generous patron, and in which he died, surviving Chaucer by some years, as may be seen by the dates on the tomb of the former in St. Saviour's Church, and that of the latter

in Westminster Abbey. When he retired to the Priory, Gower took to himself a wife—wife and nurse, for he became blind, and calmly lived out his days in a peaceful seclusion. He had gathered

JOHN GOWER.

strength and raised fire to write his "Tripartite Chronicle," the Latin poem which told of the fulfilment of the warning that he had uttered in the "*Vox Clamantis*." After his death his brethren piously honoured his memory. The light from a painted window above his tomb fell on the effigy of the poet, and on the collar and badge of the Swan which had been conferred on him by the

King, of whom so much was hoped by those who looked with eager eyes for the coming of more intellectual light and of civil and religious liberty.

It was in 1393 that, his Majesty, making an excursion from the Tower in the royal barge, met Gower on the silent highway of the river. The poet, who had been for some time ill, was on his way to London in his boat—probably coming from Gravesend or Greenwich—and in response to the royal request, went on board the barge to speak to Richard. After some conversation the young King asked the poet to write him a book for himself to read. This request was the immediate cause of the "*Confessio Amantis*" (Confession of a Lover,) a poem in which the author, old and infirm, abates nothing either of his literary or moral strength, though the title of the poem might indicate something of the style of Boccaccio; and Gower says it is meant to be

> "Wisdom to the wise,
> And play to them that list to play."

It is in reality a loyal exhortation to the King, no less than an appeal to the better nature of all who read it. To the King it was dedicated, but Richard having disappointed all who had begun to hope for a lasting reformation in his character, the poet substituted for his royal dedication: "What shall befal hereafter God wot!" and inscribed the book to Henry of Lancaster.

What did befall was that Henry took the throne

as Henry IV., and while Gower retired, as we have seen, to the Priory near the bridge foot in Southwark, Chaucer, who was writing the "Canterbury Tales," went to live at a house in Westminster, where he died before his last work was finished. He was poor then, and may very well have hoped that the son of his late great friend and patron, the Sovereign, who in childhood was doubtless often the companion and playfellow of the young soldier, poet, and courtier, would deal generously with him. Nor was his expectation altogether frustrated. Three days after Henry was proclaimed King, Chaucer received a pension of forty marks a year, which, with his former pension, made what would now be equal to about £600. But he lived only a year to enjoy this bounty.

There had been little or no persecution for religion in England, and martyrdom for heresy had scarcely been known under the old laws, perhaps because heterodoxy was unallied with power or influence. Henry himself, like his predecessors, might have regarded alleged heresy with no great abhorrence, unless it was made a pretext for sedition and conspiracy against the crown or the realm, but he assented to the passing of enactments which, beginning with the burning of the conscientious William Sawtre, at Smithfield, lighted those fires the stench and smoke of which may be said to have drifted over the Highway of Letters for above two hundred years.

He had been but fifteen months on the throne

when the clergy urged that a new law should be passed for the punishment of heresy, and the House of Commons joined in a petition to the King to repress with the utmost severity the teachers of the new doctrines, who "exercised schools, made and wrote books, and wickedly instructed and informed the people."

The statute against heresy was passed, and its deadly enactment was that anyone convicted, refusing to abjure, or relapsing after abjuration, should be "made over to the sheriff of the county, or the mayor and bailiffs of the nearest town; and they the same persons, or every of them, after such sentence promulgate, shall receive, and them before the people on an high place do be burned, that such punishment may strike in fear to the minds of others, whereby no such wicked doctrine, and heretical and erroneous opinions, nor their authors and fautors in the said realm and dominions, against the Catholic faith, Christian law, and determination of the holy Church, which God prohibit, be restrained, or in any wise suffered."

The Commons seem to have been as much in favour of suppressing what the Church called heresy as the clergy and nobility were; but three years afterwards we find the Parliament which met at Coventry proposing to the King to take the revenues of the Church to provide money for the war against the Welsh, led by Owen Glendower. This was called (by the clergy probably) the lack-learning Parliament, but it seems likely that the spread of learning had

begun—that the later poems of Chaucer, the "Vision" of Langland, the "*Vox Clamantis*" of Gower, were still the voice of the people. The lurid flame from the faggots and the stake shone in Fleet Street itself, but the words of the poets whose books were handed to and fro were burning in the hearts of men, and this light would never be wholly put out.

RICHARD II. (*From the picture in Westminster Abbey.*)

Neither the triumphs and the penalties of foreign conquests, the persecutions by prelates and inquisitors, nor the devastations of civil war, could quench the new light that had arisen among those who now found the echo of their own thoughts in words that rang with a clear and true note in the common language of the time. The genial, beaming face of old Chaucer was no longer to be seen in Fleet Street. The graver aspect and less vigorous form of Gower were only recalled by the memories of those who had known him well; but the work of both remained, and that of some less distinguished followed. The pen, slower but mightier

than the sword, was passed from hand to hand, and the message that went with it was now in the language of the people, and neither in French, which was still the official language of the Court and the law, nor in Latin, which till now had been the language of learning.

Properly to estimate the enormous importance of the poems of Chaucer, Gower, Langland, and their few and inferior contemporaries and immediate followers, we must remember that before 1350 the poets who sought the approbation of the higher classes of society wrote in French. Those who tried to write in English expressed themselves so imperfectly that their work was poor and weak. The rise of English romance, poetry, and narrative seems to have been stimulated by the demand of burghers, merchants, citizens, and those who would now be called "the middle class," for English, as distinguished from French or Anglo-Norman, literature.

Down to the date when the first bookseller opened his shop in the Highway of Letters, the aspect of Fleet Street was little changed from that which it bore when Chaucer last looked upon it. The street was still unpaved; and though, in the reign of Henry V., it was lighted at night by lanterns slung on ropes stretched across the road from one overhanging storey to another, the same general features, and even the same details, were to be observed in the localities which had even then become historical. Wayfarers passing from Ludgate over Fleet Bridge to the bars by the Temple, saw on the south side, beyond

the great house of Bridewell and the adjoining Bride Lane, the London mansion, or inn, of the Bishop of Salisbury, giving its name to Salisbury Court. Beyond this, Water Lane led down to the river, and next began the numerous buildings—the Priory and the Church of the Carmelites, or White Friars, to whom a large plot of land here in Fleet Street had been granted by Edward I. Their church was founded by Sir Richard Gray in 1241, and their house was rebuilt in 1350 by Hugh Courtenay, Earl of Devon, the Mayor and Commons of the City having granted to the Friars a lane which ran down from Fleet Street to the Thames, that thereon they might build the west end of their church. In the reign of Richard II. and Henry IV. Sir Robert Knowles added to the already extensive settlement, and newly built the church, of which the choir, presbytery, and steeple were erected by Robert Marshall, Bishop of Hereford.

Beyond the possessions of the White Friars in Fleet Street was Serjeants' Inn, where, as in the inn of the same name in Chancery Lane, a number of judges and serjeants-at-law had their lodgings and "commons." Beyond this were the spacious and extensive buildings, halls, and church of the New Temple, standing in a fine garden, with its terrace on the river banks, and continuing as far as the town house or mansion of the Bishop of Exeter outside the Temple bars.

On the right hand, or north side, of Fleet Street, as seen from Fleet Bridge looking westward, was Shoe

Lane, at the end of which stood a great conduit or cistern, containing water brought by leaden pipes from Paddington, where the water of several springs was collected in a "head" belonging to the Mayor and Commonalty of the City.

The conduit at Shoe Lane and the clear springs of

GOWER SHOOTING AT THE WORLD. (*From the Cotton MS.*)

Holy Well and Clement's Well, just beyond the bars that divided Fleet Street from the Strand, insured the district against lack of water. It is to be remarked that the provision of conduits, and other additions and improvements in the thoroughfares of the City, were mostly due to the munificence of wealthy citizens, who not only gave generously

during their lives, but often bequeathed large sums of money for maintaining works of public utility or for the relief of the poor and the sick. The history of the City is, so to speak, a record of the generous charity and public spirit of wealthy citizens, who recognised the truth of the scriptural saying, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth."

Beyond the conduit was "Fewter" Lane, so called, Stow says, of Fewtors, depraved or idle people, to be found lounging about the gardens there, but more probably from the felters, or makers of felted cloth, who worked there, the word "*feultre*" having the meaning of close or compact; or it may have been from *feutre* or *fautre*—a rest for a spear. The church of St. Dunstan, with its chantries and its chapel of St. Katherine, stood between Fewter Lane and Clifford's Inn, which was the gift of Edward II. to Robert Clifford, at whose death his wife, Isabella, let the house or messuage to students of the law.

Of Chancery, or Chancellor's, Lane, and the Rolls Court we have spoken already; opposite the latter was Herflete Inn, a house belonging to the Canons of Lincolnshire. This was close to the entrance to Shere, or Shire, Lane, near the bars which marked the limit of the western "liberty" of the City, and distinguished it from the shire or county.

The customs and recreations of the people born in the City continued to be robust. A great deal of their time was spent in the open air. The sports and exercises of shooting with the bow, wrestling, leaping, and tilting at the quintain, were held in the fields

or open spaces near the wells and springs of the northern suburb, where stage-plays or mysteries were acted at holiday seasons. We read of one such held at Skinners' Well, in the reign of Henry IV., which lasted for several days, and was attended by the greater number of the nobility and gentry. Its subject-matter began with a symbolical representation of the creation of the world, so that it necessarily occupied some time in performance; and the procession of the performers, with their stage costumes and "properties," was a sight in itself.

There were sports, not only on the river and in the fields, but in the streets. After evening prayers the City apprentices in Cheapside and Fleet Street practised the use of staves and bucklers, and sometimes of swords, though that was more than once forbidden. On May-day there were excursions of the Citizens to the Forest of Epping or Hainault, or to the wooded hills of Highgate, Hampstead, Greenwich, and Woolwich, to gather branches of the flowering hawthorn, which were carried home with much merrymaking, and hung up as decorations for the houses. Even great civic dignitaries did not disdain to go "a-maying," and the May-day was spent in rustic sports and dancing, either at the places whither the pleasure-seekers went to "bring in the may," or in the London streets, where may-poles were set up adorned with garlands, that youths and maidens of the City might meet to dance around them to the music of timbrel, pipe, and tabor. One of the principal may-poles was in the Strand, just beyond

Fleet Street; another was in the ward of Aldgate, opposite the church of St. Andrew, and called St. Andrew Undershaft, because the shaft, or pole, when set up, was higher than the church itself.

Not only on May-day and other festivals of the springtide and summer, but all through the sunny months, there were evening games, sports, and dancing in the City highways, and burgesses and their dames sat at doors or windows, to look on, to encourage or control 'prentices and serving men, or to award wreaths and garlands to those of their maidens who were most active and graceful, or who sang the sweetest.

There were also sumptuous pageants and splendid processions to Smithfield, whither royal and noble guests were invited to joust and tourney, and where great fairs and markets were held, not far from the space in front of the church of St. Bartholomew, where the sooty earth and blackened stones marked the spot on which the latest victims of stake and faggot had perished in the flames.

Among the sports were several ball games, of which tennis was deemed the most royal, and was played in the courtyards of great mansions, or in tennis courts adjoining town and country dwellings. Other ball games were played in Finsbury and Hoxton Fields, and even in the streets. Football was still played in Fleet Street and the Strand in the early part of the eighteenth century.

The age of the Plantagenets and the Tudors was an age of hearty eating and drinking, of hearty work and

play, that strengthened the limbs and expanded the lungs. Otherwise, the people of the City would have suffered more from the stuffy, low-ceilinged rooms of the ordinary houses, and even from the heated, but draughty, chambers of the more imposing mansions. The very banqueting rooms were not without their dangers, for the floors were mostly strewn with rushes, which, when they were fresh, were probably agreeable, but they were often unrenewed for several days, and became, as Erasmus wrote at a later date, foul with fish-bones, grease, the droppings of beer and wine, and all manner of abominations.

It was in every respect a "merry," meaning an active, stirring time, in Fleet Street, no doubt; but the repeated and unprofitable wars with France had burdened the people of England with taxes, and the brilliant victor of Agincourt had, at the instigation of the bishops and clergy, followed the example of his father, in consenting to light the fires of persecution.

Among the immediate successors of Chaucer were Occleve, his former pupil, and John Lydgate (called the "Monk of Bury"), who held the most conspicuous place, his writings being remarkable for versatility, and amazing in their extent. He was born at a village near the monastery of Bury St. Edmunds, of which he became deacon in 1393, and priest in 1397. He travelled much, and after studying at Oxford, Paris, and Padua, was one of the men in England best acquainted with ancient learning and literature, so that he could write histories of the saints for the monasteries, and tales of romance and

chivalry for the people. As many as three hundred and seventy books bear the name of Lydgate, who was known not only as a poet, but as an orator, a mathematician, and a teacher of versification and

PRIORY OF ST. MARY OVERY.

literature, for which he had opened a school at his monastery. His chief works are the "Story of Thebes" (which he wrote as an additional "Canterbury Tale"), the "Book of Troy," and "The Fall of Princes," a poem finely re-set in English from the Latin of Boccaccio. Lydgate had written for Henry V., but these three works of his were not completed till the reign of Henry VI. "The Fall of Princes," which was in the Chaucerian stanza, was designed for that patron of poets and friend of learning,

Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester ("the Good Duke Humphrey"), who had come into possession of Baynard's Castle, which he had restored after it had been destroyed by fire.

Thus we have the Monk of Bury among the frequenters of Fleet Street, where his poems and stories were known even better than their author; for, as Warton says, "his muse was of universal access, and he was not only the poet of the monastery, but of the world in general. If a disguising was intended by the Company of Goldsmiths, a mask before his Majesty at Eltham, a May game for the Aldermen and Sheriffs of London, a mumming before the Lord Mayor, a procession of pageants from the Creation for the festival of *Corpus Christi*, or a carol for the coronation, Lydgate was consulted and gave the poetry."

His facility was astonishing, and among his lighter works one poem at least has held its own to this day, for in "The London Lyckpenny," telling of the visit of a poor tailor to London to seek redress at the Courts of Law, he gives a vivid and graphic picture of the trading of the shop-keepers in the streets where they pursued their callings. As we read the quaint verses, we seem to hear the cries of the apprentices and serving-men seeking to sell their goods to the stranger, who for lack of money "could not speed." After having seen the hood which he had lost in the throng hung up for sale among much stolen gear at a stall in Cornhill, he spends his penny for a pint of wine, and, feeling

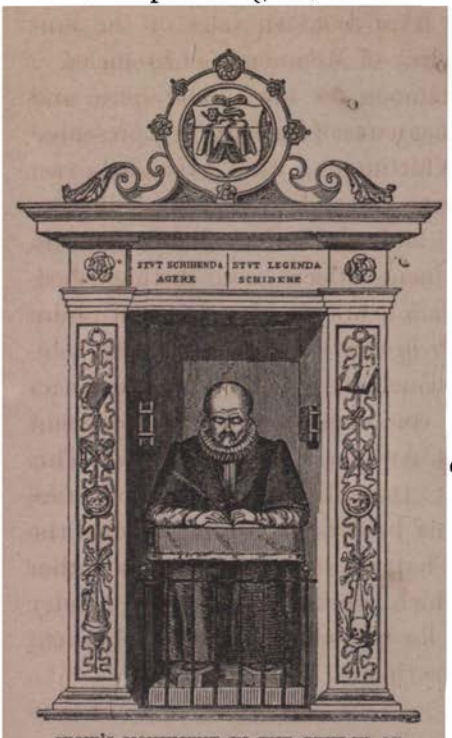
more hungry because of the savour of hot sheep's feet, prime fat beef, pies, strawberries ripe, and "cherries on the rise" (or stalk), which he cannot buy, betakes him home again, in much the same mood as the more modern Scotchman who lamented that he had "no been twa hours in London when bang went saxpence."

Thomas Occleve, born under Bow Bells, and afterwards living at Chester's Inn, in the Strand, called himself the disciple of Chaucer, whose style he followed, though his only work of importance—the "Governail of Princes" (a version of *De Regimine Principum*)—is more in the manner and with the motive of Gower. He was greatly inferior to either, but in respect to his "views" was nearer to Gower than Chaucer, inasmuch as, though he wrote against the looseness and greed of the clergy, he was inclined to defend "orthodox" doctrine, and even to regard severe punishment for heresy as a necessary remedy.

There were, of course, famous controversialists, and also famous chroniclers, in those days. One of the former, a White Friar in Fleet Street, was Thomas Netter, who became principal of the English Carmelites, and Inquisitor General in England. He was regarded as chief controversialist against the followers of Wycliffe, and was made confessor to Henry V.

Another famous man early in the succeeding reign was Reginald Pecock, who was made Master of Whittington College, by his patron, the Protector, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. He was a professed defender of the clergy against the accusations of the

Lollards, but as his defences and arguments were written in plain English, so that they could be "understanded of the people," and as, moreover, he allowed that Scripture, rather than tradition or Papal assertion, was the rule of faith, those whom he defended regarded him as one who proved too much. The Lords of the Council at Westminster refused to speak while Pecock — whom Duke Humphrey had made Bishop of St. Asaph — remained in the assembly. His books were burnt by the executioner; he was removed from his dignities, and though he was allowed to live, it was as a prisoner in a room at Thorney Abbey, in Cambridgeshire.



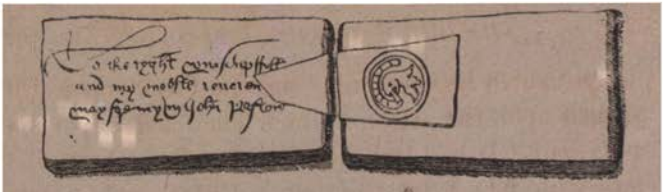
STOW'S MONUMENT IN THE CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW UNDERSHAFT.

Among the chroniclers and historians should be mentioned John Harding, a youthful retainer of Harry Hotspur, and afterwards a soldier at Agincourt, and follower of Sir Robert Umfraville. At

a later date, Thomas Fabyan, Alderman of the Fleet Street Ward of Farringdon Without, was a compiler of history from monkish tales or the random legends of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Chronicles.

That age was famous for the public spirit and munificence of the magnates of the City, as represented by the princely Whittington, who expended vast sums on reconstructing and endowing public buildings, churches, libraries, and charitable foundations in London. Many eminent citizens were distinguished, too, for their attainments in letters. Of John Shirley, whose tomb in the Church of St. Bartholomew (1456) is mentioned by Stow, the old chronicler of London, himself commemorated by a monument in the church of St. Andrew Undershaft, says, "This gentleman, a great traveller in divers countries, amongst other of his labours, painfully collected the works of Geoffrey Chaucer, John Lydgate, and other learned writers, which works he wrote in sundry volumes, to remain for posterity. I have seen them and partly do possess them.'

TOMB OF GOWER IN ST. SAVIOUR'S, SOUTHWARK.



A PASTON LETTER.

CHAPTER III.

THE GOOD DUKE HUMPHREY.

Good Duke Humphrey—Witchcraft in Baynard's Castle—Eleanor Cobham's Penance in Fleet Street—Sorcery—Foul Play—Whittington—Grey Friars and Guildhall Libraries—Value and Accumulation of Books in Fleet Street—The Stationers' Company—The Wardrobe Accounts—Stationers' Hall—Edward of York at Baynard's Castle—The Earl of Warwick in Fleet Street—The Red and White Roses—Richard of Gloucester—His Patronage of Learning—William Caxton at Bruges—Meeting of Edward IV. and Caxton—Earl Rivers' Book—The Mazarin Bible—First "Block" Printing—Movable Types—Early Printers—The "Reed Pale" by the Almonry—First Books Printed in England—The Paston Letters.

THE mention of John Stow, and his remarks on the subject of these copies of the works of Chaucer, suggest to us that few important contributions to literature were made in the later years of Henry VI., in "the heavy times during the wars of York and Lancaster."

The Fleet still brawled beneath its bridge, a bridge of stone, which had replaced the old timber structure, and, as Stow tells us, was "made by John Wels, Mayor in the year 1431, for on the coping is engraven Wels embraced by angels, like as on the Standard in

Cheape, which he also built," and the Fleet prison still frowned upon the stream, which encircled a portion of its wall. It had been rebuilt after the rebels who came with Wat Tyler had demolished it, and set free the prisoners, victims of that iniquitous "Star Chamber" Court, which was to last for two hundred years more, till the Stuarts gave the extra wrench to liberty which caused another civil war.

The horrors of the long conflict between the houses of York and Lancaster make a blood-stained episode in the history of the realm; yet, though the Highway of Letters itself rang with the din of arms, and echoed with the footsteps of the ruthless instruments of cruelty and crime, Fleet Street was still the resort of those who loved learning.

In the period immediately before the Wars of the Roses, Humphrey of Gloucester, who had come into possession of Baynard's Castle, was especially popular with the citizens, who first named him "the Good Duke Humphrey," not only because he was the most powerful and wealthy opponent of the marriage of the weak and unresisting Henry VI. to the imperious and unscrupulous Margaret of Anjou, but also because of a certain splendid generosity and frankness which were characteristics of the man, who was among the most cultivated students of science and letters in that age.

It was long before the Queen's favourite, Suffolk, Cardinal Beaufort, the Earl of Warwick, and other opponents of Gloucester, could compass his ruin; but his marriage with Eleanor Cobham, his former

mistress, after the refusal of the Pope to ratify his marriage with Jacqueline of Hainault, led indirectly to his being accused of participation in the treasonable and magic arts with which his wife was charged by those who for reasons of their own sought to implicate the Duke.

Gloucester, who had devoted much attention to such science as belonged to the time, delighted in the society of learned men, and frequently invited them to visit him at Baynard's Castle, where there were apartments containing apparatus and appliances for scientific experiments. His chaplain, Roger Bolingbroke, and his friend Southwell, priest and canon of St. Stephen's, Westminster, were proficient in much of the science then common, and of some that was uncommon. Bolingbroke was especially acquainted with astronomy—which then and for long afterwards included astrology, the two subjects being so closely identified that they were in many cases synonymous; so that, as late as the time of the Commonwealth, we find them recognised under a common title.

There were, of course, among the astronomical instruments in the chaplain's observatory in Baynard's Castle, tables and implements for casting nativities, calculating horoscopes, and determining the influences of the stars on mundane events; and it was perhaps inevitable that the Duchess, who was, however, known only as Dame Eleanor—daughter of Reginald, Lord Cobham, and herself a woman of considerable attainments—should have inquired of

Bolingbroke respecting the aspect of the stars in relation to the young King, the enemies of the Duke, and affairs at Court. It is not improbable that, by associating with the learned friends of the Duke, she also became interested in chemistry, the search for the means of transmuting the baser metals into gold, and those so-called occult sciences which, in a lower direction, were associated with what was believed to be the practice of sorcery and witchcraft.

It was, at all events, easy enough to concoct an accusation charging her with malignantly conspiring against the life and well-being of the King by the practice of magic. That this accusation was intended to strike the Duke of Gloucester is shown by the wording of the indictment, which set forth that his wife was charged with treason, "for that she by sorcery and enchantment intended to destroy the King, to the intent to advance and to promote her husband to the Crown." It was impossible, therefore, to mistake the ultimate aim of the Duke's enemies.

She was arrested, along with Bolingbroke, Southwell, a priest named John Hum, and a still more damaging acquaintance, one Margery Jourdayn, commonly called "the Witch of Eye"; but a strict examination in St. Stephen's Chapel, before the Archbishop of Canterbury—a supporter of the Duke of Suffolk, Gloucester's enemy—failed to prove that Dame Eleanor had been guilty of any more deadly offence than that of seeking charms or "philtres" to secure

the constancy and affection of her husband, a desire which, so far as the constancy was concerned, was not without reason. Some more flagrant offence had to be charged against her if the accusation was to be even colourably sustained, and evidence was procured which imputed to her an attempt to cause personal injury to the King by sorcery, through means a superstitious belief in which survived for centuries afterwards, and appears to linger still. It was asserted, but not proved, that she had in her possession a small wax figure intended to represent the King, and so prepared by necromantic art that injuries inflicted on it would cause him to suffer. As this figure was gradually melted before a fire, so he would pine away and grow slowly weaker and weaker, by the melting of his bodily frame.

It was intended that she should be condemned, with or without evidence; but Gloucester was still too powerful for it to be safe to put her to death, and sentence was passed upon her that she should do penance in public in three places in the City of London, and should afterwards be kept a prisoner for life in the Isle of Man, under the charge of Sir John Stanley. Then the people of Fleet Street saw the sad spectacle of the wife of Good Duke Humphrey walking slowly barefoot along the Highway of Letters to stand clad in a sheet and holding a taper at Paul's Cross. This public disgrace and penance was no doubt intended not only for the punishment of the Duchess, but that the Duke might lose his popularity thereby. She was conveyed from Westminster by

boat to Temple stairs, and thence walked, with sheet and taper, to St. Paul's, to stand before the high altar. Roger Bolingbroke, a learned man, was drawn and quartered at Tyburn, and died protesting his innocence of all evil intentions; Margery Jourdayn was burnt at Smithfield; Southwell was condemned to execution, but died in prison; and John Hum received the royal pardon.

Gloucester appears, by all accounts, to have said little, but to have bided his time, with more patience, it must be said, than he displayed on less moving and tragic occasions. He not improbably relied on his popularity and the influence of his name and rank, and does not seem to have suspected that he was doomed to death.

In 1447, about five years after the attacks upon him began, he, with others, was summoned to attend Parliament, not at Westminster, where his friends the Londoners were still devoted to him, but at Bury St. Edmunds, the centre of the possessions of the Duke of Suffolk, who could insure the attendance of his dependents. The knights of the shire were ordered to wear arms, the streets were filled with men, the King was conveyed to the town with a strong guard, who surrounded his lodging, as though he had reason to fear some evil design on the part of his enemies.

Gloucester, suspecting nothing, and probably never thinking of personal danger, travelled from his castle at Devizes to be present at the ceremony of opening Parliament. On the following day he was arrested

and charged with high treason. Seventeen days afterwards he was found dead in his bed; and though it was declared that he had died of apoplexy, and no marks of violence were found on his body, there was an almost universal belief among the people that he had been murdered, even as his predecessor in the Dukedom of Gloucester had been murdered, by the connivance, if not by the order, of Richard the Second. All his estates were seized by Suffolk; and as he left no legitimate heirs, nor could the unhappy Eleanor claim any of her husband's property, Baynard's Castle reverted to the crown, and afterwards came into the possession of Richard, Duke of York. Of its later fortunes there will be occasion to speak presently.

The friends of the dead Duke Humphrey reiterated their belief in his innocence of treason. The wrath of the people smouldered and spread till it burst into a flame, and the Commons demanded, in a voice which would be heard, that Suffolk should be banished the realm for five years. He never returned—never reached the asylum of a foreign shore. The great ship-of-war, the *Nicholas of the Tower*, stood off and on between Dover and Calais till it intercepted the small craft in which the fallen Minister and his retinue had embarked.

Perhaps without suspicion of imminent retribution, the proud Duke obeyed the summons of the captain, and went on board the larger vessel. His foot had scarcely reached the deck before he was saluted with the ominous words, "Welcome, traitor!" and was

made prisoner. For two days he was left with no company but his confessor. There was signalling to and from the shore, and a small boat came alongside,

BAYNARD'S CASTLE.

wherein sat the executioner, with axe and block. To him Suffolk was consigned, and by his hand the Queen's favourite, who was only reaping where he had sown, perished.

No inquiry seems to have been made—the disappearance of the Duke was understood, and his friends and enemies alike were already preparing for

the coming conflict, which, under the name of the "Wars of the Roses," has left in the history of the country the record of a dismal era of treachery and murder.

This reference to the events of those troublous times may itself be regarded as an episode in the story of the Highway of Letters, for it marks the period when the latest patron of literature in England, before the introduction of printing, lived in Baynard's Castle, within hail of Fleet Street, which had already been so closely associated with books and learning.

Nearly fifty years before that time, Sir Richard Whittington and his executors had, among other munificent provisions of that great Lord Mayor, begun the library of the Grey Friars, and paid half the cost of building and founding the Guildhall Library. There had been numerous and important additions to the superb collection of books in the libraries of the Temple, the other Inns of Court, and the monasteries of the Black and White Friars. A small collection of books, whether copied on paper or vellum, was a costly possession, but doubtless in the London dwellings of the nobility and of some of the wealthy citizens in Fleet Street and its neighbourhood, books had been accumulating which had been brought, not only from the *scriptoria* of abbeys and monasteries, and from the hands of private copyists in England, but from various parts of the continent of Europe.

The fraternity of Stationers, who were not

incorporated as a City Company till 1557, in the reign of Philip and Mary, was formed in the reign of Henry IV., and the bye-laws were approved by the civic authorities as those of "writers, lymners of books, and dyverse things for the Church and other uses."

The law of copyright in those early times consisted of a special patent for special books, so that the transcribers or copyists of Stationers' Hall, which was then in Milk Street, Cheapside, had little interest, except as copyists, in any of the greater works of the writers of that period.

That the trade of the "Stationer" had a definite standing in regard to other than Church service books, psalters, paternosters, folk-stories, and ballads, may, however, be inferred, and it would appear that decorative bookbinding was included in the "lymning and dyverse things" belonging to their craft, for in an account-book of the expenditure of the keeper of the Wardrobe (the occasional royal residence and usual repository of the State garments), we find that in the reign of Edward IV., from April to Michaelmas 1481, £1,174 5s. 2d. was required to pay for "velvet upon velvet," silks, black cloths of gold at 40s. a yard (*i.e.*, somewhere about £6 of our money), feather beds, double-soled Spanish shoes, ostrich feathers, and 20s. to Piers Baudwyn (Peter Baldwin), stationer, for binding, gilding, and dressing of a book called "Titus Livius," and 16s. each for a Bible, a "Froissart," "Josephus," and other books.

This looks as though the lanky, handsome, brave,

selfish, and dissolute Edward was what in those days might have been called a well-read man, and an admirer of well-dressed books as of well-dressed people. Doubtless the fraternity of Stationers took

OLD HOUSES RECENTLY DEMOLISHED IN FLEET STREET.

their name either from the ecclesiastical stations or localities where permission was given them to sell books of devotion, etc., or from the stands or stalls at fairs and markets, at which paternosters, creeds, missals, breviaries, rosaries, cruci-

fixes, horn-books, and "Abseys," or A B C's, were sold.

It must be remembered, however, that before Caxton set up his printing press at Westminster, printed books from Holland and Germany had come to England. They were less beautiful as works of art than some of the pen-work of the scribes, but there may have been some members of the Society of Stationers who foresaw a great future for their craft when books were multiplied by the rapid agency of movable types. That future was not far distant, but there was no immediate and eager demand for the printed volumes. The expansion was comparatively slow, for only a small proportion of the population could read. But there was another strong interest urging the minds of many who were among the more scholarly. The Reformation which had been preached by Wycliffe was being taught by other men, and long before the fraternity of Stationers was incorporated, in the reign of Philip and Mary, there had been a repeated banning and burning of books suspected or convicted of containing heretical doctrines.

The very reason of the incorporation of the Stationers into a City Company was that restrictions might be enforced against the dissemination of heretical or unorthodox (that is to say, anti-Papal) opinions. But the brethren had so well prospered that they were looking round to find a building suitable for a hall, and kept their collective eye on an old

house on the spot where Stationers' Hall now stands —a house which, in the reign of Edward III., had been the palace of John, Duke of Bretagne and Earl of Richmond, and afterwards came into the occupation of the Earls of Pembroke. It was not till the reign of Elizabeth that the Stationers were able to take steps for acquiring it from Lord Abergavenny.

Edward, Earl of March, and Richard, Duke of Gloucester, lived in Baynard's Castle, which, after the attainting of Duke Humphrey, came into their possession. It was already as splendid as a royal palace before Edward IV. made it his residence, for Richard, Duke of York, was regal in his state, more wealthy, and with scarcely less of baronial power, than Richard Nevil, the great Earl of Warwick, who, like the Duke of York and other nobles, had been summoned to Parliament, and brought hundreds of men-at-arms with them. The inn, or London house, of this "last of the barons" was but a stone's throw from Baynard's Castle, and occupied a large area near Newgate. The proud Earl kept such state there that Fleet Street was full of his retainers. There were five or six hundred of them, and their red jackets, embroidered with the Warwick badge of the bear and ragged staff, were seen in every tavern and ale-house in Fleet Street, as well as at the great inn itself. The old chronicler says, "There were oftentimes six oxen eaten at a breakfast, and every tavern was full of his (the Earl's) meat, for he that had any acquaintance in that house might have there so much

of sodden and roast meat as he could prick and carry on a long dagger."

It was at Baynard's Castle that the plans were laid for the conflict which drained the blood and resources of England; and if we are to accept the universally received opinion, it was in the historic garden of the Temple that the plucking of the red and white roses as badges of Lancaster and York took place. Over this scene Shakespeare cast the splendour of his genius, and by his vivid pourtrayal it has lived in the memory of the nation.

At Baynard's Castle, too, after Richard Plantagenet was slain at Wakefield, his son Edward, Earl of March, was proclaimed King by the Great Council in 1461. And here, twenty-two years afterwards, the subtle, cruel, and unscrupulous Richard of Gloucester awaited the return of Buckingham with the pretended message from the citizens, in reply to which Richard counterfeited a reluctant acceptance of the crown.

There can be little doubt that Richard of Gloucester was one of the most cultivated men of that time, and though he ruthlessly disregarded moral obligations in his settled purpose of gaining the throne, he was favourable to the advance of education, and to as much liberty of the people as would leave him master of the realm, by enabling him to defy the power of the nobles and cancel the feudal claims of the barons. With all his unscrupulousness and cruelty, he has probably, on the whole, had something less than justice done him by the chroniclers and historians.

Nor is it very doubtful that all three brothers—Edward IV., George, Duke of Clarence, and Richard of Gloucester—were interested in the promotion of the art of printing in England and in the establishment of Caxton at the Almonry at Westminster. They may have partly recognised how powerful an influence would be exercised by the distribution of books and the dissemination of learning among the middle class, the burgesses and citizens. No more certain means of dissolving the masterful claims of the

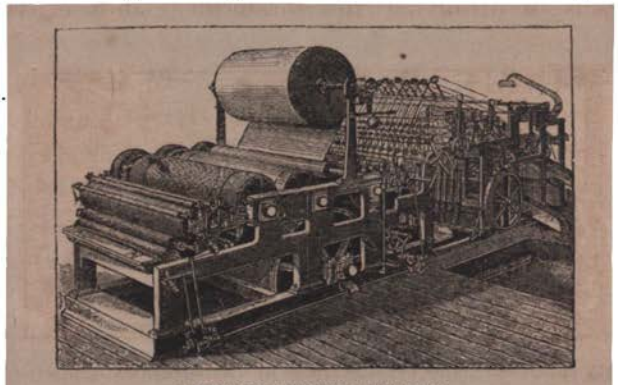
EARLY PRINTING. (*From Leichius "De Origine Typographicæ Leipsiensis."*)

barons could be devised than that of increasing the already growing intelligence and encouraging the moderate independence of the middle or trading class, and especially of the educated citizens.

Richard probably foresaw that the increase of education, by the multiplication of books and the cultivation of a love for learning, would be invaluable at a time of transition, when he hoped by intrigue and duplicity to obtain a power which he would use

in such a way as to condone the means by which he had arrived at it. But these royal and noble patrons may also have perceived that the new power was already beyond their control, and, moreover, that without their intervention it was practically in the hands of the learned men—the students and the intelligent middle class of Germany, Holland, and England.

It was by an Englishman, a member of that great



A MODERN PRINTING MACHINE.

commercial class, and a man of no little learning, that the art of printing was being made more perfect, and by him it was brought to London. Edward had made his acquaintance at Bruges during the time that the Earl of Warwick strove to restore Henry VI. to the throne. The Earl took the unhappy King from the Tower to Westminster in a kind of royal procession along Fleet Street, with the intention to make him a puppet, through whom he could himself usurp the regal authority.

It was in or about 1455, the year of the battle of St. Albans, that the Bible was printed at Mayence by John of Gutenberg, who first, in 1438, introduced movable types, to be used instead of blocks for each page, the previous and more laborious way of printing. This Bible, known as the Mazarin Bible, because it was found in the library of Cardinal Mazarin, was printed when Caxton was about thirty-four years of age.

Caxton, who was born in the Weald of Kent, had been apprenticed to the business of a mercer in the City of London. He must have attained considerable knowledge and no little distinction, for he was afterwards appointed Governor of the English merchants in Bruges, whither he seems to have been sent by the leaders of his guild, and where a considerable number of his countrymen and fellow-traders had taken up their residence, and required a person in authority to exercise control and to support their privileges. He had been employed, with one other person, in arranging a commercial treaty with the good Duke Philip, and now, though a man of some wealth and station, had become attached to the household of the Duke's son and successor, and of the Duchess—sister of Edward IV. of England. There it was that Edward and Earl Rivers found the patient, painstaking copyist at work translating and transcribing the "Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye," and to him Rivers submitted for correction his translation from the French of "Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers."

But Caxton had already heard of the improvements made in the art of printing, and was as eager as so patient a man could be to test the new invention, by which copies of books could be multiplied in a short time and with comparatively little labour. His translation of the "Recuyell," and the work of copying, had occupied a considerable time, and copies were in demand at a very large price; but the process was slow, and the copyist, who possessed, at all events, a competence, had higher aims than mere money-making, though his commercial training appears to have made him prudent, even in following the calling in which he had seen that such great results must be attained. In his case enthusiasm was happily tempered by prudence.

His attention was directed to the mode of printing from movable types by one Colard Mansion, who was endeavouring to introduce into Bruges the invention by which Fust, Gutenberg, and Schœffer had already produced an edition of the Bible which could scarcely be distinguished from the most perfect manuscript. Caxton was ready to provide the money for setting up a printing office, and, aided by Mansion, to issue from the press his translation of the "Recuyell of the Historyes," the first book printed in English.

Caxton was already a man of about fifty-five when he returned to England, and (afterwards, if not at first), with Wynkyn de Worde as an assistant, set up a printing press at Westminster in a house called

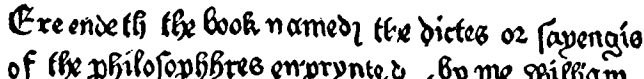
the Reed Pale, in the Almonry (or place for the distribution of alms), near the west door of Westminster Abbey.* There, for fifteen years, till his death in 1491, he carried on the business of printer, publisher, and bookseller.

One of Caxton's trade circulars, or advertisements, ran thus: "If it ples ony man, spirituel or temporel, to bye ony pyes (piece) of two and three COMEMORACIŌS of Salisburi vse, enprynted after the forme of this presēt lettre, which ben wel and truly correct, late hym come to Westmonester, into the Almonesrye, at the Reed Pale, and he shall have them good chepe." There must have been a great flutter in the Abbey precincts when the printed books began to circulate, and afterwards when Wynkyn de Worde was looking up and down Fleet Street to find a place in which to continue the business; for, at the abbey—as in the vicinity of other important churches—was a *scriptorium*, to which people resorted to buy copies of books, and a number of copyists had taken up their quarters there. The name of one of them (W. Evesham), who says that he is living at some cost in the Sanctuary at Westminster, occurs in "The Paston Letters"—in a book bill dated 1468.

These original letters, written during the reigns

* Caxton's house is said to have been a three-storeyed building, with a bold gable, on the spot now occupied by the entrance to the Westminster Palace Hotel. It had a gallery running round the upper storey. It fell down when other buildings in the Almonry were pulled down to make Victoria Street in 1845.

of Henry VI., Edward IV., and Richard III., are, it may be said in passing, a most interesting and instructive chronicle, and, though they deal chiefly with the vicissitudes and experiences of one family, are, in fact, a varied record of three generations, and afford a singularly complete picture of the times.



Ere endeth the book namedi the dictes or sayengis
of the philosophhres enprynted, by me William
Caxton at Westmestre the yere of our lordi + M +
CCCC + Lxxvii + Whiche book is late translat

FAC-SIMILE OF CAXTON'S PRINTING.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, WARWICK LANE—THE QUADRANGLE.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW LEARNING.

The Study of Greek—Greek Philosophy in the Highway of Letters—Linacre—The College of Physicians in Knightrider Street: At Amen Corner: In Warwick Lane—The Faculty—Garth and "The Dispensary"—Harvey—Colet—Lily—Fisher, Bishop of Rochester—Thomas More—Pynson, the King's Printer, by St. Dunstan's Church—Wynkyn de Worde at the Sun—Sir John More on Marriage—Cardinal Morton—The Bishop's Strawberries—Thomas More Under-Sheriff of London—Famous Footsteps in Fleet Street.

THE stimulus which had been given to learning in the chief countries of Europe, by the influence of Italy and the energy of Cosmo dei Medici, was associated with the introduction of the study of Greek, which had been taken to the schools by those fugitive Greek scholars who sought refuge in other countries after

the fall of Constantinople. With Greek came that remarkable enthusiasm for the philosophy of Plato, which introduced into the more modern world of letters purer and less sensuous views, and a nobler and more truly intellectual wisdom than existed in the schools of Aristotle. In Venice and in Florence the wealth and power of the Medici had been established, and the successful banker and politician who represented them at the time that the invention of printing was to give the vast and irrepressible impetus to learning which soon after followed, took up the Greek philosophy and the collecting of Greek writings with characteristic ardour.

Numbers of able scholars travelled to Florence, to acquire the language in which a new field of thought was being opened, and the New Learning soon spread to other countries, where rulers, like our Henry the Seventh, were ready to encourage it. Greek was first taught in England, at Oxford, by William Grocyn, of Bristol, who was educated at Winchester School, became Prebendary of Lincoln, went to Italy to study, and returned in 1491, to settle at Oxford as teacher of Greek at Exeter College. A younger man, Thomas Linacre, of Canterbury, being sent by Henry on a mission to Rome, stayed for some time at Florence for the purpose of studying Greek, and returned to England to take the degree of Doctor of Medicine, in which capacity he became a lecturer, while, as a learned professor, he taught Greek and Latin till he became both physician and tutor to the young Prince Arthur.

There was no lack of learned men in the beginning of the sixteenth century, but it was not a period in which much advance was made in what may be called national literature.

Thomas More was only twenty years old in the year 1500, and his literary work, by which he made such a distinguished mark in the world of letters, came later. John Fisher was Bishop of Rochester in 1504. Dr. John Colet, son of Sir Henry Colet, mercer, twice Lord Mayor of London, was Dean of St. Paul's and friend of the learned Erasmus, who visited England in 1497, and walked in the Highway of Letters, probably discussing with the famous Dean the foundation of that school for 153 children of poor men which, in 1512, was established in St. Paul's Churchyard, from which it has only of late years been removed. William Lily, author of the well-known Latin grammar, which continued as a school book for nearly three centuries, was the first master of the school. The echoes of the footsteps of these men were heard in Fleet Street at the beginning of the Tudor reign, for Linacre lived in Knightrider Street, near Lud Gate and Baynard's Castle, and it was at his own house that he founded the College (now the Royal College) of Physicians. There the first members of that learned body met for consultation and discussion.

The house in Knightrider Street was bequeathed to the College by Linacre, and the building on the site of it remained till comparatively recent times as the property of the institution.

From Knightrider Street the College moved to Amen Corner, where Harvey afterwards taught and lectured on the circulation of the blood. The building there perished in the Fire of London, after which Sir

EMBLEMATIC DEVICE. (*From the English version of Fisher's "Need of Prayer," 1513.*)

Christopher Wren erected a more imposing edifice in Warwick Lane, which continued to be known as the College of Physicians to within living memory, and till it had been converted into a meat market. It was of this building, near Newgate, that Garth, in his satirical poem, "The Dispensary," wrote—

> "Not far from that most celebrated place,
> Where angry justice shows her awful face,
> Where little villains must submit to fate,
> That great ones may enjoy the world in state—
> There stands a Dome majestic to the sight,
> And sumptuous arches bear its oval height;

A golden globe, placed high with artful skill,
Seems to the distant sight—a gilded pill."

Linacre, Colet, Lily, Fisher, and Thomas More, the group of famous men who may be said to have represented the world of letters in England at the beginning of the sixteenth century, were all familiarly associated with Fleet Street, and, like other promoters of learning, must have been well acquainted with Wynkyn de Worde, who, after the death of his master and partner, Caxton, had set up his press and shop at the sign of the Sun. The shop of Richard Pynson, his companion, who, in 1508, was appointed printer to Henry VII., was by the side of St. Dunstan's Church, close to Temple Bar. There appears to have been no sign to Pynson's shop, but Wynkyn de Worde chose the Sun, as emblematical of the light which was to be diffused by the art of the printer, a metaphor which, in another form, was emphasised by a printer named Day, who, a few years later, had his press-room and shop over Alders Gate, and took for his sign the motto, "Arise, for it is Day."

John Fisher, the learned bishop, who had been confessor to the Lady Margaret, Countess of Richmond, mother of Henry VII., was a liberal promoter of learning, though he was a zealous opponent of the Reformation, and in his later days supported the contention of Henry VIII. against Luther, the Pope's sentence on whom he pronounced in a sermon at Paul's Cross, in the presence of Cardinal Wolsey, who was then the Papal legate.

Alas! he had afterwards leisure, as a close prisoner

in the Tower, to meditate on the mutability of human affairs and the unstable consciences of tyrannical princes. The king, Henry VIII., whose early childhood he had watched, and to whom in later manhood he had been a counsellor, sent his grey head to the block with a brutal and bitter jest.* That head, hoisted on a pole on London Bridge, was followed eight days afterwards by the head of Sir Thomas More, also famous throughout Europe for learning, and said by a competent judge to have been in his early days the only wit in England.†

More was the son of Sir John More, knight, a justice of the King's Bench, and may have inherited a witty faculty from his father, who, having been three times married, was doubtless entitled to say, as it is recorded he *did* say, "Marriage is like dipping the hand into a bag where there are twenty snakes and one eel—it being twenty to one that you do not get the eel."

It may be remarked, in parenthesis, as having a singular relation to this saying, that Thomas More himself, when he had risen to great fame and some fortune by practising in the law courts, wished to

* While Bishop Fisher was a prisoner in the Tower, a cardinal's hat was sent to him from Rome—an indirect and arrogant defiance of Henry by Pope Paul, no doubt; but the King, in an access of fury, cried out, "Ha! Paul may send him the hat; I will take care that he have never a head to wear it on," and the aged prelate was thereupon ordered to be executed. His naked body was exposed to the gaze of the populace, and then thrown, without coffin or shroud, into a grave in the churchyard of Allhallows, Barking, near the Tower.

† Dean Colet—"There is but one wit in England, and that is young Thomas More."

marry the second daughter of a gentleman named Colt, of Essex; but out of regard to the probable disappointment of the older daughter, in being passed over, proposed to and married her instead. This is but an example of the singular conscientiousness of the man who, for a long time in his early years, lived a life of penance and discipline, and when he became a successful pleader would take no fees from poor clients, nor from widows and orphans. His grave, thoughtful face, the firm but humorous mouth, the bright, penetrating eyes, must have been familiar in Fleet Street. Born in Milk Street, West Chepe, he was a veritable Londoner, first educated at the then famous school of St. Anthony, Threadneedle Street, from which he went into the service of Cardinal Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor to Edward IV.

THOMAS MORE. (*From the Portrait by Holbein.*)

Morton had been Master of the Rolls in 1479, and afterwards became Bishop of Ely, living at a mansion with a fine garden in Ely Place, Holborn. This garden, like some others in the City and suburb, was famous for its fruit, and especially for strawberries,

Thus Shakespeare makes the designing Richard of Gloucester say to Morton—

> "My Lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn,
> I saw good strawberries in your garden there:
> I do beseech you send for some of them."

The Cardinal Bishop Morton died in 1500, but he had sent his young friend, Thomas More, to Oxford, to learn Greek of Linacre and Grocyn; for it was customary for the noble patrons to whom younger sons of good families were sent as pages and confidential attendants, to provide for the promotion and preferment of their *protégés*, and to undertake the completion of their education.

THE ISLAND OF UTOPIA. (*From the Edition of 1518.*)

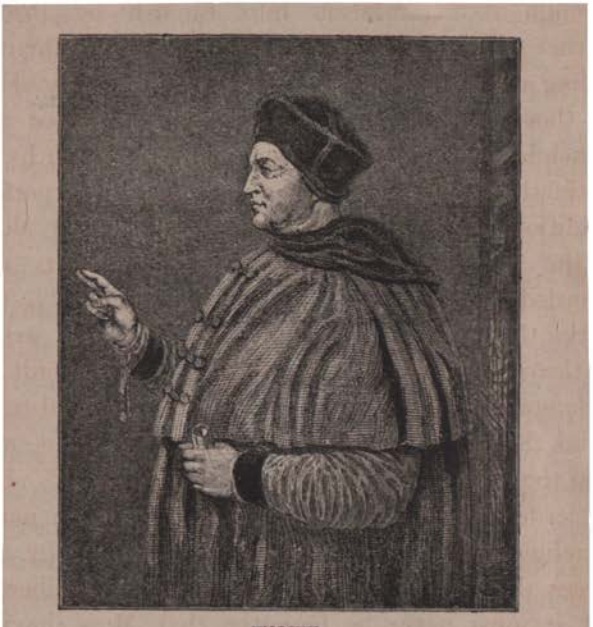
After leaving the University, More returned to London, and a year before his father died became a student of law at Lincoln's Inn. At twenty-one he was returned to Parliament, and not long after he had been called to the bar, was appointed under-sheriff of London. The independence which he maintained to the end of his life was manifested in his opposing the application of Henry VII. to Parliament for a subsidy to provide a marriage portion for the Princess Margaret.

More was for two or three years Reader at Furnival's

Inn, and at the time that his favourite daughter Margaret (afterwards Margaret Roper) was born he lived in Bucklersbury. It was probably there that he wrote in Latin the "Utopia," that delightful essay which has given a word to our common language, and with which later generations became familiar through its translation into English by Bishop Burnet. This book can scarcely be read without a feeling of keen regret that, as the author grew older, he theoretically, if not practically, abandoned the principle of complete religious freedom, which he so distinctly set forth as being necessary to a perfect condition of a State and of society. Not alone in the "Utopia," but in many of his letters and recorded conversations, the tender humanity, the piety, the gentle humour of this foremost writer of the period, so delight us that it is difficult to understand how, by his voice and pen, he could commend the harsh punishments, the persecutions, and even the doing to death of so-called "heretics." But the cruelties and oppressions inflicted in the name of religion are scarcely to be equalled even by the crimes that are perpetrated in the name of liberty; and, it must never be forgotten that More, having the courage of his convictions, eventually became a martyr to a charge of treason founded on a difference of opinion.

It was More's scrupulous and lively conscience, as well as his comparative indifference to the attainment of wealth or of high station as a reward for subserviency, which caused Henry VIII. to stop

short at admiration for his great ability, delight in his wit and pleasure in his society, and to refrain from taking him for an adviser and following his counsel. Wolsey, a less scrupulous, a more ambitious, and a far more artful, showy confidant, was already in a position alternately to rival and to truckle



WOLSEY.

to the King, who for so many years remained on terms of friendly intimacy with the great Cardinal. But Henry cast him away at last, in a manner which it would have been hopeless to attempt with a man like More, who in his wise integrity was immovable against the temptations of wealth or ambition.

CHAPTER V.

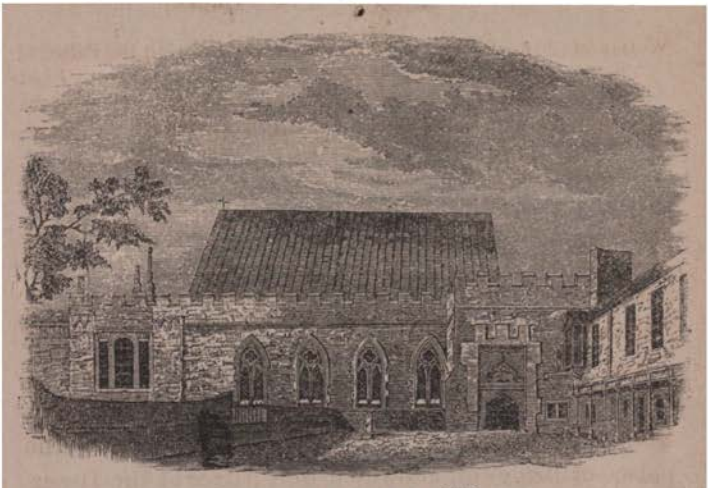
KING, CARDINAL, AND SATIRIST.

Wolsey in Chancery Lane—A Harmony in Crimson—In the Palace of Bridewell—The Fall of Wolsey—Gorgeous Pageantry in Fleet Street—The Marching Watch—The Highway of Letters at Night—Wholesale Hanging—Horn Lantern Bearers—The Bellman—Milton—Herrick—John Skelton—His Lampoons on Wolsey—"Speke Parrot"—The Star Chamber.

THE series of striking scenes, picturesque pageants, and splendid processions which marked different periods in the reign of the much-married and much-murdering Henry the Eighth, and give gorgeous colour and regal pomp to the aspects of its history, are chiefly associated with Fleet Street—the highway from Westminster and the palace of St. James to the palace of Bridewell and the prison-palace of the Tower.

Down Chancery Lane rode the great Cardinal Wolsey, Archbishop of York, on his way to the Rolls Court, to Lincoln's Inn, or to some noble house like that of the Bishop of Ely, in Holborn. It is recorded that he himself once had a house at the Holborn end of the Chancellor's Lane, on the west side, but this would probably have been before he had mounted on the wings of fortune, and had begun to think of a more palatial abode; before he appeared in public in almost regal state—in a robe of crimson taffeta and satin, black velvet tippet, edged with sable (the royal fur), and wearing a rich biretta or cap, while the red hat which marked the cardinalate was borne before

him on a cushion, along with the broad seal of England, which bespoke his rank as Lord Chancellor. Thus he rode in the Highway of Letters, preceded by a serjeant-at-arms bearing a silver mace, and by



HALL OF ELY HOUSE IN 1772.

ushers who cried aloud to clear the way for "His Grace of York." The crimson saddle and housings of his mule made a flush of colour, a "harmony in red," amidst a glittering cavalcade of bearers of silver crosses, pillow-bearers, attendants mounted on horses with scarlet trappings, and footmen bearing pole-axes or halberds.

Thus "the proudest man alive," as Cavendish, his gentleman usher, once said he was, rode to the trial of Queen Catherine at the great hall of the Black Friars, while Henry was living at the sumptuous palace of Bridewell, which he had rebuilt.

In the same state the Cardinal Chancellor probably rode to that Parliament which also met at Black Friars, before he fell from his high estate, and looked no more upon the face of the Sovereign who abandoned him to the ruined ambition which to him meant death.

It was in the palace of Bridewell that the Cardinal received the intimation of his approaching disgrace from the hand of the King himself; as depicted by the great dramatist:—

> "The letter, as I live, with all the business
> I writ to his holiness. Nay then, farewell!
> I have touched the highest point of all my greatness;
> And, from that full meridian of my glory,
> I haste now to my setting: I shall fall
> Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
> And no man see me more."

Wolsey's last appearance in the vicinity of the Highway of Letters was when, after making an inventory of his magnificent jewels, plate, cloth of gold, silks and tapestries, which he surrendered with the rest of his property, valued at the immense sum of 500,000 crowns, he entered his superb barge of state that he might go to Putney on the way to Esher.

As we all know, he died at Leicester Abbey, on the journey from York. His wealth had been taken by the Crown, and York Place became the royal palace of Whitehall:—

> *1st Gent.* Sir,
> You must no more call it York Place; that is past,
> For, since the Cardinal fell, that title 's lost:
> 'T is now the King's, and called Whitehall.
> *3rd Gent.* I know it;

> But 't is so lately alter'd, that the old name
> Is fresh about me. —*Henry VIII.*, Act iv., Scene 2.

By some error or perversity an old house by the Temple, opposite Chancery Lane, has of late years been called "The Palace of Henry the Eighth and Cardinal Wolsey," as though there had been a palace in that locality shared by the imperious Sovereign and the magnificent Minister. The decorations that distinguished the front of one of the old buildings were, perhaps, to be attributed to Sir Amias Paulet, when he was imprisoned in the gate-house of the Middle Temple, by order of the Cardinal, who imposed a fine by ordering him to rebuild the portal.

Cavendish tells us that Sir Amias had re-edified it very sumptuously, "garnishing the same on the outside thereof with cardinals' hats and arms, and divers other devices, in so glorious a sort that he thought thereby to have appeased his old unkind displeasure."

Aubrey (1680) says that the devices had been defaced, for it was carved in very mouldering stone, but the arms of Paulet, with the quarterings, were in the glass. It was rebuilt by Wren about 1684, but some decorations of a similar kind seem to have been given to the front of the neighbouring building, which was the office of the Chancellors of the Duchy of Cornwall to Prince Henry, eldest son of James the First. Henry VIII. had no palace between Bridewell and Westminster till he converted York Place into a royal dwelling.

Even before the royal house of Bridewell was rebuilt

and became a palace, Henry was familiar with Fleet Street and the City, east and west of St. Paul's. On the 20th of June, 1509, the young King and Queen rode in great pomp from the Tower to Westminster, through the City, which was adorned with rich silks and tapestry and in some parts with gold brocade; the Lord Mayor, aldermen, sheriffs, and City Companies attending the procession.

His Highness had already caused all "foreign" (which meant provincial or suburban) beggars to be banished the City and dispersed to their respective parishes. He had also committed to the Tower Empson and Dudley, the extortioners employed by his father to impose taxes on the citizens, and many of the subordinate agents of these detested commissioners were made to stand in the pillory in Fleet Street and to ride through the main thoroughfares with labels in their hats and their faces to the horses' tails, amidst execrations and the more material hostilities of pelting with filth and market refuse.

In that same year, on Midsummer Eve (or the Eve of St. John the Baptist), Henry, disguised as a yeoman of the Royal Guard, had been in Chepe to witness the grand cavalcade of the City Watch—a spectacle which must have been completely after his own taste, for it was a march of two thousand men, splendidly bedight and armed. Amidst their ranks were many superb pageants, illuminated with nearly a thousand large lanterns borne upon poles upon men's shoulders, and cressets, or metal baskets, in which tarred rope, set on fire, cast a flickering glare on

halberds, corselets, helmets and sumptuous coats of mail, and robes of silk embroidered in gold and silver. On the houses on each side of the streets hung oil lamps, enclosed in glass and decorated with garlands of flowers and greenery of birch branches and St. John's wort.

Here and there some enterprising trader had fixed a branch of iron curiously wrought and hung with many lamps, which gleamed and glittered like stars. The procession was headed by the City music, followed by the Lord Mayor's officers in splendid liveries. The sword-bearer, on horseback and in superb armour, preceded the Lord Mayor, who was mounted on a horse richly caparisoned, and attended by a giant and two pages, three pageants, a company of morris dancers, and a number of footmen. The sheriffs followed in similar state, and after them came detachments of demi-lancers, in bright armour and riding stately horses; carabineers in fustian coats, with the City arms on the backs and breasts; archers, with bows bent and sheaves of arrows by their sides; pikemen and halberdiers, in corselets and helmets; billmen, with helmets and aprons of mail; and with each division, musicians, drums, standards and ensigns. The march began at the conduit in West Chepe. The streets were thronged with spectators. Before the march began tables had been set before the houses, with bread and cakes and flagons of ale and wine, served by the City 'prentices. Ladies and the wives of the citizens sat in the windows and the balconies or galleries which overhung shops and stalls. The sounds of song

and lute and many voices in concert were heard within, until the fanfare of trumpets, the roll of drums, and the great hum and shout of the multitude increasing in volume, showed that the procession had begun. The steady radiance which filled the streets was broken by shifting lights, by the glare of rising flame reflected from steel and gold, and flashing in wavelets of fire, as the living stream poured on—the grey smoke from the cressets and torches hanging in a fantastic wreath in the upper air.

LUD-GATE. (*From a print published about* 1750.)

Under the City wall by Ludgate a great bonfire threw a strange light upon the mighty steeple of St. Paul's, and the ruddy glow was reflected in the Fleet. Lud Gate itself was open, and in the great space before the Cathedral another bonfire threw a brilliant gleam into every jewelled window, illumined every pinnacle, and seemed to change into flickering, fantastic shapes every carving of cornice and gargoyle in that vast west porch.

"Thy goodly buildings, that till then did hide
Their rich array, opened their windows wide,
Where Kings, great peers, and many a noble dame,
Whose bright pearl-glittering robes did mock the flame
Of the night's burning lights, did sit to see
How every senator in his degree,

Adorned with shining gold and purple weeds,
And stately mounted on rich-trappèd steeds,
Their guard attending, through the streets did ride
Before their foot-bands, graced with glittering pride
Of rich gilt arms."

Twice each year the ceremony of the marching of the City Watch took place, and on the next occasion—on the Eve of St. Peter—the young King was accompanied by the Queen and the Court. This was all very delightful, and the procession was a worthy spectacle even for a King; but the picturesque force was an expensive institution, and on the nights when there was no procession, and neither moon nor lamps to light the streets—except a few dim horn lanterns, each containing a candle and slung on a rope or placed in a window—the foot-pads, cut-purses and rioters were about as little under terror of the armed watchmen as they were in the days of Dogberry and Verges. The show had lasted for about thirty years, when Henry took more emphatic measures for terrifying evil-doers, by hanging a few hundred of them as warnings. The citizens were loth to part with the pageant, but attempts to revive its former glories were ineffectual. Almost equally ineffectual was the resort to hanging all the rogues who could be caught, though Harrison tells us that Henry (he had grown fond of the gallows in the later part of his reign) had hung up, of great thieves and petty thieves and rogues, three score and twelve thousand during his reign, and adds, "He seemed for a while greatly to have terrified the rest; but since his death the number of them is so increased, that except some better order be taken,

and the law already made be better executed, such as dwell in uplandish towns and little villages shall live but in small safety and rest." This was in 1586, and the City Watch had been put down in 1540. All attempts to revive it were abandoned in 1569, when a standing watch was appointed for the safety and preservation of the City. Then came the watchman, who commenced his rounds by reminding the inhabitants of City streets to hang out their lights, and kept light sleepers awake half the night by shouting,

> "Lanthorn and a whole candle light!
> Hang out your lights! Hear!"

the "hear" being a vociferous ejaculation.

In the time of Queen Mary the watchman was made a peace-breaker by being furnished with a bell, and though, in a later day, Milton's poetical fancy invested even the bell with a certain grace, it must have been as intolerable a nuisance and as convenient a warning to depredators as the clump of the modern policeman's boots under our window. When will some poet of our own day give us a verse on the policeman's boot, like that of Milton in the "Penseroso"?—

> "Some still removed place will fit,
> Where glowing embers through the room
> Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
> Far from all resort of mirth,
> Save the cricket on the hearth,
> Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
> To bless the doors from nightly harm."

How these lines suggest some quiet bye-way in Fleet Street, or some City precinct, some secluded

nook or off-shoot of the Highway of Letters, like the poet's dwelling in St. Bride's Churchyard, or a sequestered abode, like his garden-house in Aldersgate Street! His memories of the night-hours in Bread

OLD ST. PAUL'S, WITH THE SPIRE. (*From Dugdale's "History of St. Paul's, 1658.*)

Street, Cheapside—where he was born—may have suggested the "drowsy charm." If Milton could thus invest the watchman with interest, so could Herrick, but in his more robust and turbulent manner. Herrick's watchman, as introduced in the "Hesperides," is not a man to promote somnolence. He wakes up his hearers to assure them of their safety, rouses them effectually to encourage them to sleep securely—

> "From noise of scare fires rest ye free,
> From murders, Benedicite,
> From all mischance that may fright

Your pleasing slumbers in the night,
Mercy secure ye all, and keep
The goblins from ye while ye sleep.
Past one o'clock, and almost two;
My masters all, 'good-day to you.'"

Herrick, the erratic parson, may have written this when he left the dull seclusion of his rude bachelor cottage in his distant western parish, and came to London for a few days' bout in Fleet Street and the world of letters with Ben Jonson, or a night or two at the "Devil" Tavern, in the later days of the Apollo, when Ben was growing old, and the drama was on the decline.

Among the frequenters of Fleet Street, as the Highway of Letters, we might almost include King Henry himself in his earlier years, for he, at all events, took some place in the literature of his time, and by no means an insignificant place either.

The golden-haired, ruddy-faced, stalwart young Sovereign was no poor judge of a poem or an essay. His first tutor was a poet, and one who walked in the Highway of Letters in his later, as in his earlier, days, and had stood high in the estimation of Henry the Seventh. His name, John Skelton, should be mentioned along with the names of the early teachers of Greek and tutors of the royal princes. He was already known as a writer of verse in 1480 to 1490, and before the latter year had graduated at Oxford as Poet Laureate, a degree in grammar, including versification and rhetoric. It was after he had taken holy orders, about 1498, that he was appointed tutor to the young prince Henry. He was promoted to

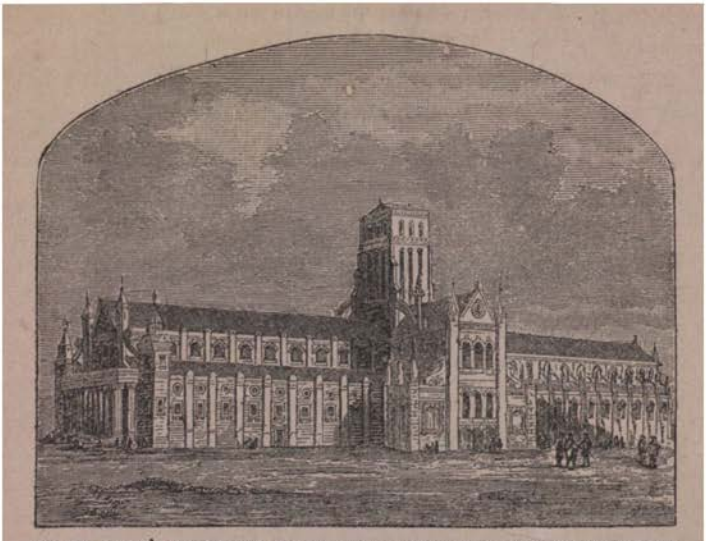
the rectorship of Diss, in Norfolk, and died in 1529, in Westminster Abbey Sanctuary, where he had taken refuge to escape the wrath of Wolsey, who had once been his friend, but against whose later assumptions he had written some quaint and scathing satirical verse, in a form which, though it seemed much like a jumble of rhymes, was obviously meant to hold the masterful Cardinal up to public scorn.

So highly were Skelton's earlier poems in Latin and English appreciated by scholars, that Erasmus, in a Latin ode dedicated to the boy prince, then nine years old, speaks of the tutor as a special light and ornament of British literature, a guide to the sacred sources of learning. Caxton also had spoken of him in his translation from the French of a prose romance founded on the Æneid, and begged that "Mayster John Skelton" would correct any errors that he might find in it.

Skelton was not only inclined (so the Dominicans said) to the doctrines of the Reformers, but he had actually married the mother of his children, and so broken the rule of celibacy. This was sufficient reason for regarding him with suspicion; but he was also a man of the people, and had, in an allegorical poem, after the manner of Gower, given a voice to their complaints.

At that time, the parrot—made familiar as a household pet after the voyages of Columbus—was not uncommonly found in the houses of the gentry. Under the title of "Speke Parrot," Skelton, in a jumble of rhyming, jingling lines—after the manner

of Chaucer's seven-lined stanza—issued half-concealed sarcasm against Wolsey. It is easy, even now, to see



OLD ST. PAUL'S FROM THE SOUTH-WEST, AFTER THE FALL OF THE SPIRE.
(*From Dugdale's "History of St. Paul's," 1658.*)

that by "Bo-ho!" and "Hough-ho!" he meant the King and Wolsey when he wrote:—

> "Bo-ho doth bark well, but Hough-ho he ruleth the ring,
> From Scarpary to Tartary renown therein doth spring,
> With 'He said' and 'We said,' I wot now what I wot,
> Quod magnus est dominus Judas Scarioth."

Under this semblance of nonsense verses, he also published "Why come ye not to Court?" in which some of the lines are aimed with sufficient coarseness at the Cardinal's alleged origin:—

> "Our barons be so bold,
> Into a mouse-hole they wold

Rin away and creep,
Like a meiny of sheep;
Dare not look out at dur
For dread of the mastiff cur,
For dread of the butcher's dog,
Wold wirry them like an hog.
For an this qur do gnar
They must stand all afar,
To hold up their hand at the bar;
For all their noble blood
He plucks them by the hood,
And shakes them by the ear,
And brings them in such fear.

. . . . .

Thus royally doth he deal,
Under the King's broad seal,
And in the checker he them checks;
In the Star Chamber he nods and becks,
And beareth him there so stout,
That no man dare rowt (snort),
Duke, earl, baron, nor lord,
But to his sentence must accord.

. . . . .

The King's Court should have the excellence,
But Hampton Court hath the pre-eminence,
And Yorke's place,
With my lord's grace,
To whose magnificence
Is all the confluence,
Suits, and supplications,
Embassades of all nations."

In yet another piece, called "Colin Clout," in the name of the people he calls upon the prelates, the bishops of estates, to open the "broad gates of their spiritual charge, and come forth at large, like lanterns of light in the people's sight, in pulpits authentic, for the weal public."

The Speaking Parrot, in one incisive line, gives a reason for Wolsey's arrogance: "He carrieth a King

in his sleeve if all the world fail;" and says: "Since Deucalion's flood there were never seen so many thieves hanged and thieves never the less; so much prisonment for matters not worth an haw; so bold a bragging butcher, and flesh sold so dear; so many plucked partridges, and so fat quails; so mangy a cur the great greyhound's peer."

These extracts are not the most violent and vituperative, and they give us a singularly vivid suggestion of the time just preceding that still worse day, after Wolsey's death, when the great greyhound himself had become mad, and the sentences of the Star Chamber or the Chancery kept alight the fires of Smithfield, and caused the rivulets of Tower Hill to stream with noble, and often with innocent, blood. Skelton, had he lived longer, could scarcely have escaped the fury of his former pupil. At the time that his sarcasms were levelled against Wolsey, the King had begun to be jealous of his Minister, and Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, had remonstrated against the oppressive demands made on the clergy by the Chancellor. Skelton died in the refuge where he had sought safety, and it is conjectured that the King had granted him some small stipend, or permitted him to receive some emolument from his rectorate, a mark of consideration which would have scarcely been accorded him had his Majesty's old tutor lived long enough to differ from him on points of doctrine, or to deny his supremacy.

CHAPTER VI.

POETS AND PRINTERS IN FLEET STREET.

Falstaff and his Companions in the Fleet Prison—Sir Thomas Wyatt—Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey—The New Poetry—The Ballade, the Sonnet, and the Rondeau—Wyatt in Prison—Surrey's Frisk in the City—He is sent to the Fleet—Wyatt's Death—Surrey's Sentence and Execution—The Seymours—The Howards—Tottell, of Fleet Street, prints the New Poetry—John Jaggard—Joel Stephens—Shakespeare at the "Hand and Star"—Successors of Caxton in the Highway of Letters—Early Printing and Publishing Stationers—The Stationers' Company—Printing the Bible—Tyndal—Miles Coverdale—Cranmer—The Matthew Bible—The "Great" Bible—The "Bishop's" Bible—Printing in France—Whitchurch and Grafton in Fleet Street—Grafton in the Fleet Prison—Early Printed Books.

THE mention by Skelton of the odious and utterly unconstitutional secret court of the Star Chamber, and his reference to the number of prisoners, may remind us that the royal prison, called the Fleet, still frowned sullenly on the stream from which it took its name, and by which prisoners were conveyed in a boat to the river entrance—the Water-gate—of a building to enter which was too often to leave hope behind. But the gate—which resembled the Traitors' Gate of the Tower of London—led to what was afterwards called "the Common Side," where prisoners were confined for misdemeanours, or offences not amounting to serious crimes or to treasonable actions.

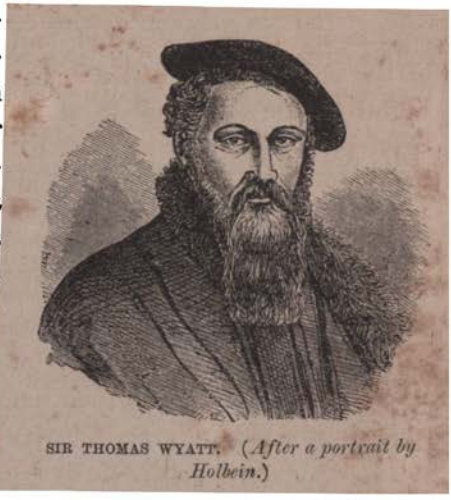
Shakespeare makes the Judge Gascoine order Falstaff and his companions to be taken to the Fleet,

when the fat knight, with Shallow, Pistol and Bardolph, had assembled at Westminster to see Henry the Fifth return from his coronation at the Abbey. As they were only sent to await the further commands of the judge, part of the prison was probably used even at that time as a place of detention.

Among the most gifted and the most brilliant of the courtly throng who, in the days of Henry the Eighth, made a splendour in Fleet Street, when a royal procession or a pageant passed from St. Paul's to Whitehall, or when the Court and Council were held at the Palace of Bridewell, there were none more conspicuous than Sir Thomas Wyatt and his son, and the young Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and son of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk. The elder Wyatt and the younger Howard were famous in the world of letters, and their names still live as the introducers of a new style of poetry—the chieftains of a new company of courtly "makers." They had both been in Italy, where they had imbibed the "sweet and stately measures and style of the Italian poetry. As novices newly crept out of the schools of Dante, Ariosto and Petrarch, they greatly polished our rude and homely manner of vulgar poesy (the poesy of the common language) from that it had been before."

Wyatt was a diplomatist, and was entrusted by the King with an embassy to Spain, during the critical time of the contention between Henry and the Emperor Charles concerning the divorce of Catherine. He also attended the Emperor as English Ambassador

Extraordinary during his journey in France and the Netherlands. His address and astuteness were as conspicuous as his great abilities and accomplishments in arts and arms; and his handsome presence accentuated those attainments which made him, at the age of five-and-twenty, so attractive that he was in continued favour with the King, except for a short period after his return from Ghent, when his sympathy with the Reformers, and his liberal views, were not in accordance with the changed attitude of Henry, which had occasioned the disgrace and execution of Thomas Cromwell, the successor of Wolsey.



SIR THOMAS WYATT. (*After a portrait by Holbein.*)

Wyatt had been a friend, not only of Cromwell, whose energy in carrying out the King's determination to dissolve the "religious houses" he doubtless admired, but of Reginald Pole, whose bold opposition to the divorce of Catherine and the repudiation of the Pope's supremacy, not only deprived him of the royal pension and of his valuable Church preferments, but compelled him to leave England. The bitter animosity of Henry was continued to all the family of Pole, whom the Pope had received and made a

Cardinal. Even the aged mother, the Countess of Salisbury, was sent to prison on a charge of treason, and, after two years of close confinement, was sentenced to execution.

It was on a charge of disrespect to the King and traitorous correspondence with Pole that Wyatt was sent to the Tower, but he was there only for a few months, and was not only acquitted, but restored to the favour of Henry, who conferred upon him a grant of land in Lambeth, in addition to his own estate at Allington, and the adjoining house, formerly belonging to the friars, at Ailesford, in Kent, bestowed on him by Henry while he was on his embassy to Spain.

Wyatt's writings were numerous, and he wrote not only poetry, but prose, with variety and grace, but yet occasionally with a vigour and sedateness of style which befitted his more serious temperament. His young friend the Earl of Surrey might well have said of his letters, translations, and poems, as he said of his stately form—that there "strength and beauty met." His religious poems, paraphrases, and translations, and, indeed, most of his prose, like that of the other writers of the time, except those who dealt with theological subjects, are less known than the ballads, songs, and sonnets, which are not unfamiliar to modern readers. Perhaps the best known are that pensive love-song, beginning, "Blame not my lute," and some of the short pieces which maintain a certain decisive or leading idea—such as "The Courtier's Life."

Surrey was some thirteen years younger than Wyatt, but had held the office of Cup-bearer to the King when he was thirteen, and carried a state sword before Henry at the coronation of Anne Boleyn, when Wyatt served as "ewerer." He not only brought into fashion the *ballade*, the *sonnet*, and the *rondeau;* but he has also the credit of being the first English writer in blank verse—the *versi sciolti*—or free (unrhymed) verse of Tuscan poets, which was then in fashion in Italy. In this form the first and fourth books of the Æneid had been translated into Italian; and Surrey translated the same two books into English. His poems, bright, tender, and with a certain easy flow and facility of expression, are less thoughtful than those of Wyatt; but they show an advance in style and expression, which perhaps more completely assimilates them to modern forms of versification.

Wyatt was but thirty-five when he died of a fever, caused by riding in inclement weather and with great haste to Falmouth, to meet the ambassador from Charles V., and bring him to London. It would seem that the young Earl of Surrey (he was only twenty-two at Wyatt's death) looked up to his older friend as an example, not only of high attainments but of virtuous and noble character, as may be seen from the plaintive elegy in which he mourns his loss. Surrey, who had succeeded to the earldom when he was seven years old, on the succession of his father to the dukedom of Norfolk, had in his character much of the liveliness, and even some of the rackety

disposition, common to the young nobility who from childhood had been attached to a lively Court. He was married in 1535, at the age of eighteen, to the Lady Frances Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford, and in 1542 was made a Knight of the Garter, a distinction which may or may not have had some effect in inciting him to quarrel with, and send a challenge to, a gentleman of Middlesex. For this offence he was sent to the Fleet Prison, which he truly described as "a noisome place, with a pestilent atmosphere."

This was in July, 1542, and he had, in fact, about a month's imprisonment for an act which, in his defence, he ascribed to "the fury of reckless youth." On his liberation he joined his father, who, by Henry's command, was about to cross the border to attack the Scots.

In April, the next year, we find Henry Howard again, not only in Fleet Street, but in the Fleet Prison. It is scarcely credible, but is nevertheless true, that this young blood—already famous in arms and letters, and who had but just written an elegy on his late friend and counsellor, the virtuous Wyatt—had been, in company with Wyatt's son and another companion, for a frisk in the City, where they seem to have manifested a reckless disregard of law and order, by misdemeanours similar to those with which Londoners were familiar in the early part of the present century.

They did not, that we know of, wrench off knockers, but they may have played havoc with

the signboards that then distinguished almost every shop, and the charge brought against them by the Lord Mayor and civic officers was that they went about the streets at midnight in manner unseemly, break-the windows of the citizens with "stone-bows," which probably were the early editions of our present "catapults." Rioting in the City was quite as serious a matter then as it is now, but unlike modern aristocratic roysterers, these young men were not let off with a fine—at any rate, the Earl of Surrey was not. He was summoned before the Privy Council, for he was a Peer, and was consigned to the "noisome place," where he seems to have had a rather longer durance than on his first imprisonment there; though, in a few lines of quaint satirical verse, he recorded that his object in waking the City sluggards was to alarm sinners with whom ordinary precept and preaching had been tried in vain.

Alas! these experiences of a prison were but the lighter shadows of that dark cloud which was settling down upon the house of Howard. The Seymours, their implacable enemies, were rising to power. The uncle of the prince who was to succeed Henry on the throne was of more importance than the uncle of Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard. Seymour was created Earl of Hertford, and placed in command at Boulogne, in place of Surrey, who was recalled. The impetuous and indiscreet poet spoke angry words, which could not be recalled, and was sent as a prisoner to Windsor. It was the beginning of the end, for at the close of the same

year, both Surrey and his father were committed, not to the Fleet, but to the Tower—the father by water, the young Earl by land. For the last time the brilliant poet appeared in Fleet Street, on his last journey, except that from his prison to the hill just outside its wall. Almost the last judicial act of the dying King was to stamp the death-warrant with his signature, for he was too ill to write, and his sign manual was carved on a stamp. On the 21st of January, 1547, the fair head of Henry Howard was severed from his comely body by the executioner. His father, Norfolk, a man whose base truckling to the ferocious King had equalled that of Seymour himself, survived as a prisoner in the Tower, only because the signing of his death-warrant was delayed, and the King himself had passed beyond the vain shadows of pride and power.

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY. (*After Holbein.*)

It was not till ten years after Henry's death that the poems of Wyatt and Surrey were printed and published together by Richard Tottell, at the sign of the Hand and Star, within Temple Bar, in Fleet Street. Tottell became printer, by special patents, of the books of

common-law in the several reigns of Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, and his successors were, respectively, John Jaggard, in the reign of James I., and Joel Stephens, in the reign of George I., each of whom used the same sign of the Hand and Star, and lived on the same spot as that now occupied by Mr. Joshua Whitehead Butterworth, who succeeded to the ownership of the house and business which came into the possession of his family in the last century. Mr. Butterworth still holds the original leases of the same house—No. 7, Fleet Street—which existed in the time of Richard Tottell, the only modern addition being the half-brick front, which was placed there more than a hundred years ago. Jaggard, who succeeded Tottell, issued the first printed edition of Romeo and Juliet, and his printing house was in the rear, the premises now occupied as Dick's coffee-house. There is some probability that Shakespeare often called at the Hand and Star to correct the proof sheets of the immortal play; and Mr. Butterworth, by whose family the house was restored to law publishing, became the Queen's law publisher, and embellished his books with the original colophon used by Tottell.

The successors of Caxton, namely, Wynkyn de Worde, Pynson, Machlinia (or William of Mechlin), who were in Caxton's service, had settled in Fleet Street, and Wynkyn de Worde became one of the first members of the Stationers' Company. They, as well as Thomas Hunt, all printed books before and after Caxton's death, but Tottell, of the Hand

and Star, and Rastell, of the Star, were soon afterwards also busy in Fleet Street, though the number of books issued was small, and increased very gradually.

In other parts of London, at St. Alban's, and in other places, printing presses were set up, and books had been printed at Oxford as early as 1478; but the world of letters at that time had comparatively few accessions, though much controversial matter and many theological and polemical treatises had been written.

As we have seen, the productions of the more distinguished writers were known, but they were not printed for several years afterwards. Caxton in his day had announced that the books which he put forth (some of them written or translated by himself) were not for the unlearned or for common wits; but the long list of works which he published contained few of an essentially erudite or profound order. Though most of them were either of a devotional or of a romantic character, and were doubtless intended for the larger class of readers represented by the Church and the nobility, there was no neglect of books of what may be called a popular character, that is to say, such as would be sought for by those whose imagination and intelligence had been quickened by the opportunities for learning which had reached the higher class of traders and artificers.

That Caxton should have printed the statutes of the first year of the reign of Richard III. and of the first second, and third Parliament of Henry VII., is

suggestive; but more important to the general reading public of that time, and to the world of letters, was the issue of the poems of Chaucer—"The Tales of Canterbury," which ran to two editions, "The Book of Fame," "Troylus and Cresseide," and some minor

PLAN OF FLEET STREET IN 1563.

poems; the "*Confessio Amantis*" of Gower; Lydgate's "Court of Sapience," and some others.

Caxton's successors seem to have followed much the same fashion; but printers had become also booksellers, the "stationers" dealing not alone in the works which they printed, but in other books produced in England or abroad. Still the demand for the new books was not great. Nor did the subsequent incorporation of the Stationers' Company by Philip

and Mary much aid the diffusion of learning. The purpose of that incorporation appears to have been to impose restrictions on printers and publishers, by forbidding the issue of any books which bigoted censors pronounced to be heretical in expression or tendency. It was again made heresy to deny the Papal supremacy; to suggest the right of private judgment; or to claim the privilege of reading the Scriptures, though this last had been conceded before the death of Henry, and all had been confirmed by the Reformation, which was endorsed by the leaders of the Government of Edward VI.

There had been comparatively little of what may be called secular literature printed in the time of Henry VIII., and the publication of controversial matter, either political or theological, would have endangered not only the books, which would probably have been ordered to be burnt at Paul's Cross or in Fleet Street by the common executioner, but would also have placed authors and printers in peril of fine, imprisonment, or the stake.

To burn heretical and seditious writings, or printed treatises and tracts, condemned by the censors, was an important part of the business of the common executioner, and had been the custom for some generations; but, unhappily, ever since the adoption of the stake, the torture chamber, and the gibbet as remedies for doctrinal differences, the authors had frequently been burnt also. For this reason men of strong convictions, who were inclined to the tenets of the Reformation, found it so perilous to remain

in England after having declared their opinions, either by speech or by writing, that many sought refuge in Holland and Germany, and were protected and encouraged by English merchants settled there.

Among these refugees was William Tyndal, a learned canon of the then new foundation of Christ Church, Oxford, who with others had left England to seek on the Continent not only freedom to express his opinions, but a free press by which to disseminate them.

Numerous tracts advocating the Reformation doctrines had been brought over to this country from Antwerp and Hamburg, printed in Latin and English, and among them was one little book by Tyndal, in which, with much plainness, was discussed the question of the lawfulness of the King's divorce. But Tyndal had done far more than this. Assisted by John Fry (or Fryth) and William Roy, who were afterwards both put to death as heretics, he had, in 1526, completed a translation of the New Testament, printed copies of which (the first printed translation of any portion of the Scriptures in English) were secretly brought to this country. In this, at all events so far as the translation was concerned, Tyndal was assisted by the equally learned Miles Coverdale, who had been a Friar of the Augustines at Cambridge. The prior of the house of which Coverdale was one of the brethren, was the scholarly and open-minded Dr. Barnes, who promoted among the men of the colleges not only classical learning, but discussion of those tenets, the study of which

was exercising the minds of scholars of liberal and progressive tendencies.

Barnes also became a refugee, escaping to Germany, where he found friends among the leading Lutherans. He and Coverdale were associates, and Coverdale joined Tyndal in the translation of the Scriptures. What share each of them took in the marginal comments and interpretations cannot be decided, but it is probable that these were at the time chiefly attributed to Tyndal; and it is only fair to say that the condemnation of the translation to the flames may have been due more to the marginal references than to the text itself, though, even in the text, certain applications of the words of Scripture were incorporated in a manner for which there was little warrant in any version professing to be a pure translation.

Opposition was at first manifested by an attempt to buy up all the copies for the purpose of burning them, the effect of which, of course, was to exhaust the first issue, and give not only opportunity but funds for the production of another, and a carefully revised, edition. Then followed the declaration of the high ecclesiastics and the Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, against all translations of the Scriptures into English; but Tyndal had already printed the Pentateuch in Hamburg, and, with Miles Coverdale, had prepared to translate the whole Bible.

He was not suffered to live to achieve this work. Although he had protectors in the English

Company of Merchant Adventurers and the friends of the Reformation at Antwerp, where he lived with one of the said merchants, but probably in seclusion, English influence at last secured his arrest in 1535, while his host was on a visit to one of the great annual fairs. After about a year's imprisonment, during which his friend and co-worker, Coverdale, continued the translation of the Bible, he was strangled, and his body was burnt at Vilvorde in 1536.

By that time Coverdale had finished his complete translation, and it was printed. Latimer was then noted, not only as a Reformer, but as a plain and popular preacher. He had been previously charged with heresy, and protected himself by signing certain articles then proposed to him, but he advocated the restoration of the liberty of reading the Holy Scriptures, and the King, recognising in him a valuable ally, as a preacher who was opposed to the supremacy of the Pope, made him his chaplain, gave him a rectorate, and when he was further charged with heretical preaching, and was excommunicated and imprisoned, interposed that he might be released, absolved, and reinstated.

Latimer was made Bishop of Worcester. Thomas Cromwell, soon afterwards becoming Secretary of State, and himself acquainted with the translation of the New Testament by Erasmus, supported the majority of the convocation of bishops in the vote for an English Bible which might be read by the people. Coverdale's translation from the German and Latin

into English, pronounced to be faulty but free from heresies, was chosen at the instance of the King, who gave his royal licence. The Bible was printed, it is believed, in Zürich, and the first copies were brought into England in 1536, the year in which Tyndal suffered. A new edition of Coverdale's Bible was printed in England in the following year, and at about the same time another complete English Bible, in folio, was published abroad. This was called the Matthew Bible, from the name of Thomas Matthew, who appeared as the translator, but who was really John Rogers, Chaplain to the English merchants at Antwerp. He had adopted all that had been jointly done by his friends Tyndal and Coverdale, and had carefully revised Coverdale's work, which had originally been strictly formed on an examination of five separate translations.

By the royal order, Coverdale's Bible had been circulated, and copies of the Scriptures in English and in Latin had been ordered to be placed in the churches, where they could be read by or to the common people. Even with another edition of Matthew's translation, carefully revised by a Reformer of Oxford, named Richard Taverner, the number of copies did not supply the new demand, encouraged by the King, who perceived that his free circulation of the Scriptures would be a distinct disavowal of the papal supremacy, and by Thomas Cromwell—now Lord Privy Seal—who was promoting the progress of the Reformation.

In April, 1540, appeared the folio known as

"Cromwell's," or the "Great," Bible, and sometimes as "Cranmer's" Bible. It was a folio revision by Coverdale of his own and Tyndal's edition, under the supervision of Cranmer, and was collated with the Hebrew and Greek texts. This was the translation then appointed to be read in churches, and it remained as the authority till 1568. In that year, Elizabeth, desiring to institute a new translation, as a corrective to the Calvinistic and democratic notes and annotations of the "Geneva" Bible in favour among the Puritan Reformers in England and Scotland, entrusted Archbishop Parker to convene a company of learned men and biblical scholars, to prepare a revised version. This has been called the "Bishop's" Bible, and was in general use in churches till it was superseded by the new revised version of the Conference ordered by James I.

This brief account of the issue of the Holy Scriptures in English is so directly associated with the Highway of Letters, that no apology need be offered for dwelling on such a great and important event. Cromwell's, or the Great, Bible was sent to Paris to be printed—by permission of the French King—for the type used there was exceedingly clear and perfect; but the care of the printing was entrusted to Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch, printers, in Fleet Street. They were, however, prevented from completing their work by the French clergy, who seized and burnt nearly the whole impression, and the printing had, therefore, to be completed in London.

Richard Grafton was a printer under the patronage

of Thomas Cromwell, and, therefore, of the King. His colleague, Whitchurch, had set up in business in Wynkyn de Worde's old house, "The Sun,"* where he published Erasmus's paraphrase; and it is said that in the days following the persecutions he married the widow of the martyred Cranmer.

Grafton suffered by the death of his patron, Cromwell, and by the relapse when the King again temporarily forbade the dissemination of the Scriptures; for it is recorded that he was committed to the Fleet Prison, for offending in this respect, or for printing the Bible, or portions of it, without authority; but he emerged from this trouble, and became printer to Edward VI., with a press at the Gray Friars, the foundation of Christ's Hospital in Newgate Street.

Pynson, the companion of Wynkyn de Worde in the service of Caxton, was among the most successful of the earliest printers in Fleet Street, and his "Dives and Pauper" (1483) was probably the first book printed there, as his edition of Terence (1497) was the first of the Latin classics printed in England. It was after his appointment as printer to Henry VIII. that he published the Chronicles of Froissart and Fabyan, and altogether he is credited with the printing and publishing of no fewer than 215 works.

* Wynkyn de Worde seems to have removed to "The Falcon," over Falcon Court.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DISPERSION OF LIBRARIES.

Valuable MSS.—The Accumulation of Rare Copies—Benefactors to Letters—The Slow Growth of Printing—Obligations of Book Borrowers—A Bishop's Warning—Oxford Library—Its Dispersion by "Visitors" under Edward VI.—Tiptoft's Contributions to Letters—Destruction of Abbeys and Churches by Thomas Cromwell—Leland's "Itinerary"—Hall's "Chronicle."

If it should seem strange that only a very small proportion of the books in existence before the introduction of printing should have been re-published, even when the art was thoroughly established, we must remember that there were comparatively few readers, and still fewer persons who could afford to buy books. Though a vast number of beautiful and costly manuscripts, including copies of poems, travels, histories, legends and chronicles, were accumulated in various parts of the country, they were mostly in the libraries of universities, colleges, abbeys, monasteries, cathedrals, and churches, or in institutions like the Temple and Inns of Law, or the halls of City Corporations. In some cases, wealthy and accomplished noblemen had libraries of considerable value, but some of these men were the benefactors of colleges and similar foundations, to which they presented or bequeathed their literary possessions.

For several years after Caxton had sought to increase the number of general readers, by providing books for them, the Highway of Letters only very

gradually developed into a highway where he who ran might read. At first the cost of some of the principal books, if printed, was little less than that of copies made by the pen of ready and skilful scribes. The possession of a printed work was in a sense a distinction; and every library of importance still consisted chiefly of manuscripts, which were guarded with jealous care, none of them being lent, even to personages of the highest station, without a solemn obligation and a valuable deposit as a pledge or guarantee for their being returned uninjured. On a manuscript of Matthew Paris—now in the British Museum—there is an inscription in Latin, and with the signature of John Russell, then Bishop of Lincoln, intimating that whosoever shall obliterate or destroy the Bishop's memorandum respecting the ownership of the volume, is solemnly declared to be accursed. This mode of impressing a borrower who might be tempted to become a stealer, seems to have survived, in a travestie or burlesque form, even to the present century, to judge from the doggrel inscriptions occasionally to be seen within the covers of old books.

Perhaps the most conspicuous example of a literary benefactor—of the period just before the introduction of printing—is Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, one of the most munificent patrons of the world of letters, who established the famous library of the University of Oxford. Of the 600 volumes which he presented to it for its foundation, 120 were valued at £1,000—a very large sum in those days.

They were the most splendid and perfect copies that could be procured, exquisitely written on vellum, and elegantly embellished with miniatures and illuminations. Warton, in his remarks on the library, in his "Dissertation on the Introduction of Learning into England," tells us what became of this sumptuous collection. Only a single specimen volume was suffered to remain. It is a beautiful manuscript, in folio, of Valerius Maximus, enriched with the most elegant decorations. "All the rest of the books—which, like this, being highly ornamented, looked like Missals, and conveyed ideas of Popish superstition—were destroyed or removed by the pious visitors of the University in the reign of Edward VI., whose zeal was equalled only by their ignorance, or, perhaps, by their avarice." Several of the volumes of Duke Humphrey's library, however, remain in various collections, so that probably many of the Oxford manuscripts were dispersed rather than destroyed.

The next famous contributor to the promotion of learning, by the same means, was John Tiptoft, who was made Earl of Worcester by Henry VI., and was sent to execution by Warwick, under the pretext of his having been guilty of cruelty many years before, while he was Governor of Ireland.

He was a man of great political and military ability, which may account for the determination of "the King-maker" to put him out of the way, and he was also an ardent scholar and admirer of books. His translation of Cicero's treatise on "Friendship" was published by Caxton, of whom he was one of the

chief early patrons. Fuller, speaking of him as one of the "Worthies," said that, at his death, "the axe then did, at one blow, cut off more learning than was left in the heads of all the surviving nobility." Tiptoft was buried in the monastery of Blackfriars.

Speaking of the visitation and dispersion of the libraries in the reign of Edward VI., reminds us that at the time when the great English Bible was ordered by Henry VIII. to be placed in the churches, and the supremacy of the "Bishop of Rome" over the English Church was denounced by the King, Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, was at the height of his power. In obedience to the King's command, no less than in accordance with his own creed and policy, he had organised a powerful commission, entrusted with the tremendous office of suppressing and dissolving the religious houses of the land.

It happens sometimes, by a strange misconception, that the demolitions effected by the agents of Thomas Cromwell are attributed to the professed followers of Oliver Cromwell, the Protector of the Commonwealth. It may, however, be safely affirmed that less mischief was done to churches in which the fanatic troops of the Puritan army were said to have stabled their horses, and in which they wrecked the altars, and broke the images and the stained glass windows, than had been previously accomplished in buildings for ages regarded as sacred edifices, destroyed by order of a Sovereign who sent people to be burnt for denying the Real Presence in the Eucharist; and who afterwards re-imposed frightful penalties for

those accused of disbelief in articles of faith which the Reformers could not honestly accept.

There was one man engaged in quietly visiting and minutely recording the history and condition of the antiquities of the buildings and monuments of the kingdom during the years from 1536 to 1542, who, though an advocate of a reformation in the Church, deeply lamented the destruction of edifices, and the raid made upon almost priceless libraries of monasteries, where he used successful efforts to preserve some of the books, and remit them to places of security. This was John Leland, who was born in London, and who was one of the boys of St. Paul's School, under the mastership of William Lily. He was one of the earliest Greek scholars in England, and was acquainted, not only with the French, Italian, and Spanish, but with the Welsh and Saxon languages. Henry made him his librarian, and appointed him to be one of his chaplains, giving him the rectory of Poppeling, in the marches of Calais, but, with a keen eye to the value of those antiquarian pursuits to which Leland was attached, allowing him to employ a curate, and to remain in England. Leland devoted himself for six years to travelling by Royal Commission to every part of the kingdom, and, with the title of "The King's Antiquary," making a record of every town, city, and village—their situations and natural advantages, their buildings, inhabitants, and chief occupations, and especially their castles, churches, monasteries, and important buildings. Of these he minutely described the architecture, possessions,

libraries (which he catalogued with painstaking care), and all the antiquities necessary to make a complete account. This he afterwards compiled, in various works, but more completely in his famous "Itinerary," which contains a record of his travels, and an account of the ancient monuments and buildings which he visited.

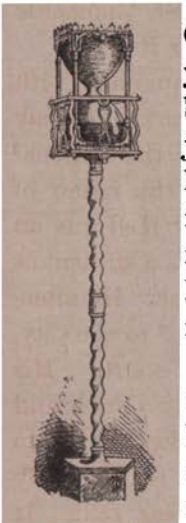
Leland, who was a friend of Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder, and wrote an elegy on his death, lived till 1552, but during his last two years was insane. The disorder may have been partly attributable to mental disturbance caused by the destruction of buildings and objects which he regarded as valuable national possessions. He was buried in the church of St. Michael le Querne, at the eastern end of Paternoster Row.

Most students of antiquities are acquainted with Leland's Itinerary, if not with his other works. It may also be said that no one can well study the national chronicles without being familiar with the name of Edward Hall, the successor of Fabyan. Hall was an Oxford and a Cambridge scholar, and was a student at Gray's Inn, where he was called to the bar. He afterwards was appointed "Common Serjeant" to the City, and became a judge in the sheriff's court. His "Chronicle," entitled the "Union of the two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and Yorke," is, so to speak, a slice of history which he did not properly round off, for it extended only to the year 1532. It was Richard Grafton, the printer, of Fleet Street, who printed and published it in 1548, having completed the work by bringing it up to date.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ECLIPSE OF LETTERS.

The Boy King in the Highway of Letters—His Learning—Sir John Cheke—Roger Ascham—Bishop Gardiner—Sir Humphrey Wingfield—The Book and the Bow—Italian Tales—The King's Journal—Ubaldini—Bonner and Gardiner in the Fleet—The Grey Friars—A Palace converted to a Reformatory—Foundation of Christ's Hospital—"Blue Coat Boys" who walked in the Highway of Letters—Bishop Hooper in the Fleet—Queen Mary in Fleet Street—Wyatt's Rebellion—Persecutions—The Charter of the Stationers' Company—Suppression of Free Printing—Elizabeth and the Stationers—Fox—"The Acts and Monuments"—Day, the Printer—Oporinus—Grub Street.



PREACHER'S HOUR-GLASS.

On the 24th of February, 1547, the young Prince Edward, who had been brought, as he himself says in his journal, from Hertford—but as Holingshed and other chroniclers who have followed him say, from Hatfield—set forth from the Tower to ride through Fleet Street to Westminster for his coronation.

There was now some hope that there would be more security for the lives and fortunes of those who followed the Reformed opinions, which had made more progress in the City of London than in most other places. The dark cloud that had rested on the land, and especially on London, during the later days of

Henry, was about to be lifted. There was some prospect that executions at the end of Fetter Lane, burnings in Smithfield, and hangings at Tyburn would be stayed; and though many of the people had been brutalised by the cruelties which they had witnessed during the persecutions, the religious and political outlook was brightening.

The royal boy, who was the ward of his uncle Seymour, Duke of Somerset, rode amidst a splendid and noble company through streets sumptuously adorned, and wherein elaborate pageants made a splendid and picturesque show.

One touch of nature—of boy-nature—is recorded of him by the chronicler, who says: "At St. Paul's his Majesty was particularly diverted by a Spaniard, who slid down a rope, head-foremost, on his breast, from the battlements of St. Paul's steeple to the Dean's gate in the churchyard." There are few other recorded instances—though there are some—in which the lad exhibited sudden and natural youthful emotion. It was seldom that the royal boy, prematurely trained, both in learning and in royalty, forgot to act and speak as though he was expected to be "grown-up" before his time.

Even when we have been accustomed to admire the sedate, religious character of the young King, and his evident desire to do good and to promote charitable work, we lament his restricted, almost joyless, childhood, his feeble constitution and early death. He seems to have given the whole force of his character to sustain his sense of consistency. There appears to

have been little evidence of youthful warmth of affection or of tender sentiment in his disposition; nor was his education such as to promote either. His

CHEAPSIDE CROSS IN 1547, SHOWING PART OF THE PROCESSION OF EDWARD VI. TO HIS CORONATION. (*From a contemporary painting.*)

childhood had been passed in comparative seclusion. By what must have been a kind of forcing process, his acquirements had been various and considerable. Not only his half-sister, Elizabeth, but Lady Jane Grey, had to some extent shared his studies. His equals, if not his superiors, in learning, they were

apparently taught by the same masters—Sir John Cheke and Roger Ascham.

Sir John Cheke—he was Master Cheke when he became tutor to the prince—was professor of Greek at Cambridge, and wa a man famous for learning, and especially for the introduction of an improved pronunciation of the Greek language, for which he was assailed with no little acrimony by Bishop Gardiner. He had devised a plan for removing from the English language all words not derived from Saxon roots, and left several works illustrating this proposition, including a translation of the Gospel of St. Matthew. He also contemplated a reform in spelling, which would, perhaps, in that day have been of no little advantage.

Whether Gardiner's opposition to the Greek pronunciation caused him, in the following reign, to include Cheke among those threatened with persecution for their advanced Protestantism, cannot be known; but Cheke recanted in terror of the stake, and, it is said, died of remorse for having done so.

Roger Ascham was the University orator at Cambridge, and, though he was a Protestant, was Latin Secretary to Mary and afterwards to Elizabeth. A master of style in that age, he wrote so simply and forcibly on the subject of education that his "Schoolmaster" may be profitably read by teachers of the present day. This book was not published till after his death, in the reign of Elizabeth.

Roger Ascham was one of the men whose footsteps lingered in Fleet Street when he was not engaged at

Cambridge, where he succeeded Cheke as Public Orator. He was a great advocate for instruction in the use of the bow, among other healthful sports, as a relief from study, and the second part of his "Schoolmaster," entitled "Toxophilus," is chiefly devoted to the subject of archery, and is a pleasant book, for it is full of a kind of scholarly gossip. He wrote in English instead of in Latin, as he desired to be read by the gentlemen and yeomen of England. He had been educated, with other children, in the house of Sir Humphrey Wingfield, who taught the boys well, and included good shooting in the instruction by which he expected them to profit. "Would to God," says Ascham, in his quaint way, "would to God all England had used, or would use, to lay the foundation of youth after the example of this worshipful man in bringing up children in the book and the bow, by which two things the whole commonwealth, both in peace and war, is chiefly valid and defended withal." The same healthy tone of mind caused Ascham to oppose "the manners and doctrine our Englishmen fetch out of Italy"—a remark probably caused by the influence on English minds of Boccaccio's "Decameron" and other Italian tales of corrupt and licentious character; some of the best of which, however, suggested to Spenser and Shakespeare much of their immortal verse.

Edward, who had been chiefly trained in the Protestant doctrines by the Protector and those employed about the prince, was, as he himself wrote in his Journal, brought up till he was near six

years old among women. The formal etiquette with which his governors caused him to be treated, and the self-consequence which was the substitute

LATIMER PREACHING BEFORE EDWARD VI. (*From a woodcut in Fox's "Martyrs," 1563.*)

they offered him in place of authority, was another unhealthy element in his education. "I have seen," said Ubaldini, "the Princess Elizabeth drop on one knee five times before her brother ere she took her place." At dinner, if either of his sisters was permitted to eat with him, she sat on a stool and cushion, at a distance beyond the limits of the royal daïs. Even the lords and gentlemen who brought in the dishes before dinner knelt down before they placed them on the table.

The physical constitution of Edward VI. was not

such as to bear the enforced study and the seclusion to which he was subjected in childhood. He was little more than a child when he was called upon by those who surrounded him to sanction, in the name of the Reformation, persecutions to the death, not against the Roman Catholics, but against those who, claiming liberty of conscience, differed from the Protestant doctrines as to baptism or other tenets, and were sent to the stake for refusing to conform.

In one instance, at all events, the young King exhibited some emotion when he was asked to sign the warrant for burning a poor woman who held heretical opinions, contrary alike to the Roman and the Reformed faith. He refused at first, but when pressed to do so, burst into a passion of angry tears, and told Cranmer that if the act was a sinful one it was he, the archbishop, who would be answerable for it to God, as it was by compulsion that the royal signature was affixed to the warrant.

This is the best thing—because the most natural and youthfully sensitive thing—recorded of him. Mostly, we find accounts only of the demure precision and of the self-consciousness which such a training as his would develop. The Milanese physician, Cardano, who visited England in the last year of Edward's reign, thought he observed a look in the boy's face which presaged an early death. From him we learn that the young King was in stature below the usual height of lads of fifteen or sixteen; his complexion was fair, his eyes grey, his gesture and general aspect sedate and becoming. He seems to have possessed

much of the Tudor dignity, and not unfrequently rose to the self-assertion which characterised the family. When the active promotion of the reform of religion was carried on, the Bishops Bonner and Gardiner were consigned to the Fleet Prison, where the latter had to lie on a little pad of damp straw for a bed. Neither of them could appear in Parliament, and they were only released by the act of general pardon passed at the end of the session.

The funds that were to be obtained from the suppression of the chantries were to be devoted to erecting grammar schools, for educating youth in virtue and godliness, further augmenting the universities, and making better provision for the poor and needy. Cranmer and other bishops were opposed to the diversion of the property of the chantries to the crown. Probably they knew, as most people may have suspected, that it would go in the main to the noble lords who were left executors to Henry's will, and it was by them and their companions, who hoped for a share, that the measure was proposed.

The number of those who would now be called "the unemployed" had, from various causes, been vastly augmented, and especially after the suppression of monasteries and religious houses, which were often surrounded by dependents. The merciless vagrancy law against mendicants and idle or masterless people, which had been previously enacted, and which the young King in his Journal designates "an extreme law," had practically renewed slavery in England, for

persons living idlingly or loiteringly for the space of three days could be taken before a justice of the peace, branded as vagabonds, and made over to the persons informing against them, to be their slaves for two years, living on bread and water, or "small drink," and forced to work by beating, chaining, or otherwise. If they ran away before their time was up, they could be captured, and might be made slaves for life. If they ran away a third time, they were liable to be put to death as felons. The children of beggars could also be seized by anyone who chose to retain them as "apprentices," the boys till they were twenty-four, and the girls till they were twenty years of age.

But there were some significant recognitions on the part of the young King of the duty of promoting education and making some provision for the poor wanderers of the streets. Those immediately affecting the locality in which we may ourselves be said to be wandering, were the establishment of the famous school of "Christ's Hospital," on the foundation of the former Grey Friars' Church and monastery in Newgate Street, and the conversion of the great disused palace at Bridewell into a combined reformatory prison and refuge for the destitute.

The hospitals for the sick and the insane—St. Bartholomew's and Bethlehem — were the two "Royal" hospitals already founded, and it had been the intention of Henry VIII. to appropriate the building of the former Grey Friars, in Newgate Street, to the relief of the poor of the City. Edward expanded

the scheme by making it the foundation of a school, to establish which wealthy City merchants and others subscribed the necessary funds. At first, however, the aged and infirm poor were also relieved there. The young King, stimulated by a sermon on charity preached by Bishop Ridley, at Westminster, determined to seek the aid of the citizens to inaugurate some practical scheme of benevolence.

This was in the last year of his reign, and he was so much affected by the sermon that, after the service in the chapel, he sent for the bishop, to speak with him privately in the gallery at Whitehall. Among young Edward's sterling virtues was that of applying what he heard to himself, and testing it by his own principles and practice; so, after thanking the bishop for his discourse, he said, "My lord, you willed such as are in authority to be careful thereof, and to devise some good order for the relief of the distressed; wherein I think you mean me, for I am the first that must make answer to God for my negligence, if I should not be careful therein, knowing it to be the express command of Almighty God to have compassion of His poor and needy members, of whom we must make account unto Him. And surely, my lord, I am, before all things else, most willing to travail that way."

He then asked the bishop to tell him immediately what he had considered to be the best way to carry out the suggestions made in the sermon, and Ridley replied that something might well be done for the poor in London, where the citizens were wise and were

doubtless also pitiful and merciful, so that they would willingly undertake any charitable enterprise that might be entrusted to them.

Edward at once wrote a letter to the Lord Mayor, Sir Richard Dobbs, commanding him to call a meeting of his most trusty counsellors to consider the matter. On the following day, Bishop Ridley—who probably possessed the customary discrimination of the clergy in regard to a good dinner—went to dine with the Lord Mayor, and afterwards met two of the aldermen and six commoners of the City Council. No time was lost in sending a report to the King, that in any great scheme of charity three classes of the poor should be considered—the helpless poor, such as young fatherless children, the crippled, and the aged; those who had become poor by sickness, hurt, or disease; and the thriftless and unruly, who had become poor by idleness and vice.

EDWARD VI. RECEIVING A BOOK FROM JOHN BALE. (*From Bale's "Centuries of British Writers*, 1548.")

Edward replied that he would found three great hospitals, or houses of charity—one at the old royal manor house or palace of Bridewell, to be a workhouse and place of punishment for idle and vicious persons

who had no means of living; one a hospital for the sick and diseased poor, at the Almonry, formerly founded by the Prior of Bermondsey, and called the Almonry of St. Thomas, but suppressed by Henry VIII.; and one for receiving fatherless and destitute children, and relieving the aged and infirm poor, at the old monastery of Grey Friars, in Newgate Street, thereafter to be called Christ's Hospital.

The citizens took up the matter in earnest, and such generous contributions were made to these "Royal Hospitals," that, though the young King lived but a short time after signing the charters for the three charities, the old Grey Friars building was rapidly repaired, and 340 poor children went up with the governors to Whitehall to receive the Charters, which the King signed in the presence of his Council; after which he was heard to say, "Lord, I yield Thee most hearty thanks that Thou hast given me life thus long to finish this work to the glory of Thy Name."

The children of the school wore the blue outer garments which were the usual dress of servitors in those days, when blue was the servant's colour. Though the treatment of the scholars was often harsh and cruel, and the fare coarse and scanty, the school soon became famous, and many distinguished Blue-coat boys became afterwards well known in the Highway of Letters. William Camden, the famous scholar and antiquary, who became Master of Westminster School, with Ben Jonson as a favourite pupil; Bishop Stillingfleet; Baker, the ecclesiastical historian; Joshua Barnes, the famous Greek scholar

and translator of Euripides and Homer; the learned James Jurin, who was president of the College of Physicians; Markland, scholar and critic; Bishop Middleton, and others, among whom those of most modern celebrity may be said to have been Richardson the novelist, Coleridge, Leigh Hunt, and Charles Lamb.

Lamb, whose name is almost as intimately associated with Fleet Street as that of Samuel Johnson himself, gives, as all readers know, striking reminiscences of Christ's Hospital at the end of the last century, and from the favourable, as well as the unfavourable, point of view, for he was sent there when he was by no means robust, and a somewhat shy, retiring, stammering child. The old rough, repressive, unfeeling notion that harsh discipline was necessary in the training of children, had survived in some of the pastors and masters even to those later days of which Lamb wrote in 1820. The school and hall had then been twice rebuilt, and the system of instruction was of a higher character, though there was bullying and cruelty among the boys, and the birch and the cane were in perpetual motion.

Lamb's account of the harsh treatment of the boys is endorsed by Leigh Hunt, and also by Coleridge, who, when weeping at being left at the school, lonely, friendless, and forlorn, was told by Boyer, the head master, famous for his wigs and his deliberate method of caning, "Boy, the school is your father, the school is your mother, the school is your brother and sister and all your relations." Was it not he of

whom at his death it was said, by Coleridge, that it was fortunate the cherubim who carried him to heaven were composed of only heads and wings, or he would inevitably have flogged them by the way?

The building on the site of which the school was founded had long been traditional of civic munificence, for, as we have seen, the famous Richard Whittington, mercer and thrice Lord Mayor of London, had started the library of the house of the Grey Friars by contributing £400, a handsome sum in the year 1421. The works of this enlightened and wealthy man followed him, for not only did his executors, carrying out the provisions of his will, pay half the cost of building the library at Guildhall, but they repaired St. Bartholomew's Hospital, built the West Gate of the City, thereafter called New Gate, and founded Whittington College, which, with almshouses for thirteen poor men, stood near Upper Thames Street, on a spot to which they gave the name of College Hill. The college and almshouses were removed to Highgate in 1808, the buildings being pulled down to provide a site for the Mercers' School.

Though King Edward VI. gave his house at Bridewell and "seven hundred marks of land, late of the possession of the house of the Savoy," towards maintaining the house of correction in Bridewell, and the hospital of St. Thomas in Southwark, the aid of wealthy citizens was indispensable. It was afterwards found that the relief afforded at the latter place to indigent and idle or unemployed

persons, attracted such numbers of destitute, or pretendedly destitute, beggars from the country to Fleet Street, that the repellent conditions imposed on applicants had to be supplemented by new regulations. The institution was maintained in

GATEWAY OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL, 1750.

the once superb and spacious building till this was destroyed in the Great Fire, when another structure was erected, and became famous, or infamous, in a later time, when the poems and dramas of the Restoration and of the early Georgian period contained various references to the character and punishment of some of its inmates. Even now—though probably not a vestige of the old palace, and only a portion of the succeeding building, remains

—there is, at all events, some survival of one of its original provisions, that, to wit, for the incarceration of unruly and defiant City apprentices, who may be sent there by order of the City Chamberlain, and imprisoned in one of the "dark rooms." The establishment of the Royal Hospitals may be said to have been the last public act of the young King, for he died about a month after signing the charters. The aspect of the government had greatly changed. The Earl of Warwick was in power, and was created Duke of Northumberland. Somerset had perished on Tower Hill, execrated by the people, who resented his arrogant assumption, and particularly the display of it in building a lordly palace in the Strand, which was named Somerset House, in the construction of which it was declared that he had removed one church and taken stones and materials from others, and even from St. Paul's Cathedral itself.

The young King was to have been married to Elizabeth, daughter of Henry of France. But the negotiations came to naught, and the last plot of his new governors was to induce him to name by deed as his successor the gentle and amiable Lady Jane Grey, a plan which was devised by the conspiring Councillors at Baynard's Castle, then in the possession of the Earl of Pembroke, in whose family it remained till after the accession of Elizabeth.

The Duke of Norfolk was still a prisoner in the Tower when the death of the young King caused a reversal of all that had been done to promote the progress of the reformed doctrines and worship.

Gardiner was there also; and Bonner was shut up in the Marshalsea Prison, in Southwark, which was, in most respects, like the Fleet.

The punishment of bishops for contumacy had not been confined to those who persisted in holding Roman Catholic tenets, for, after the release of Bonner and Gardiner, a celebrated preacher and staunch Protestant, John Hooper—who afterwards became an illustrious martyr for the faith which he proclaimed—was nominated to the See of Gloucester; but, holding views probably derived from his intercourse with the Reformers of France and Germany, refused to appear for consecration in canonical robes, and was by Royal warrant consigned to the Fleet Prison, that he might reflect on his obstinacy. After some time spent in that vile place, he came to a compromise—that he would wear the robes at his ordination and when he preached before the King or in Gloucester Cathedral, but on no other occasions. He was then set free, and his consecration followed in due course.

The Highway of Letters, in the five years (from 1553 to 1558) that followed the death of Edward, provides few examples of the promotion or extension of English literature. From the day when Queen Mary went with a courtly procession through the City to Westminster, accompanied by her sister Elizabeth, and the undemonstrative Anne of Cleves—who seems to have lived unassailed, or, at all events, uninjured, through the tragedies and troubles of the time—to the day when Mary's death, at her house

at St. James's, lifted a heavy sense of dread and constant uncertainty from the nation, there were few accessions to the chronicle of Fleet Street in its relation to the advancement of learning. The smoke of the fires from Smithfield seemed to stifle the aspirations of the poet; the figure of the headsman to stand foremost in the chronicle of events; the creaking of the gibbets to forbid the repose necessary to graceful imaginings or the thoughtful conclusions of independent scholarship.

Most prominent among the personages who appeared in that great thoroughfare was Thomas Wyatt —son of the poet-friend of Surrey. His ill-considered attempt at insurrection (though it gained such support from many citizens that Mary had hurriedly to disavow her intention of marrying against the will of the people) ended by the surrender of the leader, who, by delay, had missed the opportunity of entering the City by Lud Gate.

So far from there having been any encouragement of letters in that reign, the one act which might have seemed to indicate a desire to promote the dissemination of learning by means of the printing press, was directly calculated to suppress all liberty of publication. It must be admitted that there was no concealment of the intention of the Queen and her Spanish husband in granting a charter of incorporation to the Stationers' Company, for the preamble of the charter itself was clear enough:—

"Know ye, that we, considering and manifestly perceiving that several seditious and heretical books,

both in verse and prose, are daily published, stamped, and printed, by divers scandalous, schismatical, and heretical persons, not only exciting our subjects and liege men to sedition and disobedience against us, our crown and dignity, but also to the renewal and propagating very great and detestable heresies against the faith and sound Catholic doctrine of holy mother the Church; and being willing to provide a proper remedy in this case, we, of our own special favour, certain knowledge, and mere* motive, do will, give and grant, to our beloved and faithful liege men and freemen, of the mystery or art of a stationer of the City of London, and the suburbs thereof, that from henceforth they may be, in deed, fact, and name, one body of itself for ever, and one society corporate for ever, with one master and two keepers or wardens; and that they may enjoy a perpetual succession." But the reason for this incorporation was stated to be that no person within the kingdom of England or dominions thereof "should practise or exercise the art or mystery of printing" who was not a member of the Company, and the Company should have the power to search for all books printed otherwise than by their monopoly, and to "seize, take away, have, burn, or convert to the proper use of the said society, all and singular those books which are, or shall be, printed or stamped contrary to the form of any statute, act, or proclamation made or to be made."

This was what was devised against the successors of Caxton, who had settled in Fleet Street, and had

* Mere, in the sense of *only*, sole, or complete.

formerly published and sold, without molestation, books containing free expressions, which had been circulated before the introduction of the press.

The restriction embodied in the charter became to a great extent a dead letter on the accession of Elizabeth, for, though it was at first uncertain how she, who had been a crafty and skilful temporiser, would support the completion of the Reformation, the tide of public opinion soon decided the question of a comparatively free press; and the demand for books, which the revival of Protestantism occasioned, increased the number of the members of the Stationers' Company from thirty-five to a hundred and forty. Their charter still held, however, in regard to the duty of searching for and suppressing heretical and seditious books; but the sedition and heresy were those of popery; and as Elizabeth granted special monopolies to other people who were printers of Bibles, printers of law books, and printers of Latin books, and of music, the incorporated stationers were in evil case, and petitioned Lord Treasurer Burleigh to stand their friend, as he had theretofore done, as special patron of their Company, and favourer of the art of printing. An arrangement was then made that the Company should have the monopoly of printing "all manner of books of primers, psalters, and psalms, all manner of almanacks and books and pamphlets tending to the same purpose, the A B C with the little Catechism, and the Catechism in English and Latine by Alexander Nowell." But there were sturdy objectors to all monopolies,

who claimed the right to print any lawful book, and contended that it was contrary to the liberties of the City of London for the Queen, through ill advice, to forbid them to do so. Two of these men persisted, and, strange to say, after several attempts to "bring them to book," which they stoutly resisted, they were not further interfered with. The monopolies, except that granted to the Stationers' Company, died out and were not renewed, and the Company itself, by its numbers and wealth, achieved a success which enabled it, even with the limitations imposed upon it, to prosper exceedingly, and eventually, in a later age, to hold its own in the face of more open competition.

Among the books which had the largest circulation soon after the death of Mary, was one which for some generations remained, not only a standard work of reference and "a book without which no library would be complete," but one for household reading, gruesome though it was. On the shelf, in the hall window, or in the book closet or oak chest of almost every country mansion, in many a farmer's house, as well as in vicarages, and in the dwellings of citizens and traders, Fox's "Book of Martyrs," as it was called, held a prominent place with the Bible and (in the country) some book of household or sporting lore, like that of Juliana Berners, or Tusser's "Points of Husbandry," printed and published by Tottell, in Fleet Street. Fox's "Acts and Monuments of the Church; or, Book of Martyrs," when it was translated from Latin into English in 1563, was

dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, who had then reigned above five years. It was ordered to be set up in parish churches for the use of all the people, except in times of Divine service. John Day, the printer of it, was a staunch Protestant, who had been a printer of Bibles in the reign of Edward VI., and had been a prisoner, and afterwards a refugee, in the time of the Marian persecution; and the large demand for Fox's book was some compensation to him.

We have already spoken of Day, who had his printing-office by or over Aldersgate, with the inscription "Arise, for it is Day." He was a stirring man, and had shops for the sale of his books in other places besides the printing-office. John Fox, whom he had probably known while he was in exile, became his editor, translator, and probably corrector for the press, having previously done these duties for Oporinus, of Basle.

Fox, or, as he spelt it, Foxe, was expelled from his fellowship in Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1545, on a charge of heresy. Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, Stratford-on-Avon, the progenitor of the Lucy associated with the biography of Shakespeare, engaged him as tutor for his children. Fox afterwards removed to London, and was employed in the same capacity by the Duchess of Richmond for the children of the Earl of Surrey, while their grandfather, the Duke of Norfolk, was still in the Tower, where he remained till the accession of Mary, who released him. But the accession of Mary placed Fox in such danger, because of his principles, that he fled, with

his wife and other Protestants, to Switzerland, settled at Basle, and there gained a living by reading and correcting for the press for the famous printer already mentioned.

It was there that Fox, who received frequent and accurate intelligence of events in England, planned his principal work, "The Acts and Monuments," a first sketch of which was, it has been said, suggested to him by Lady Jane Grey. This first sketch was printed by Oporinus, and was followed five years afterwards by the enlarged work. Both these were in Latin, and the last contained, of course, more ample particulars, and additional chapters of martyrology.

JOHN FOX.

Coming again to London, Fox appears to have found a refuge in Aldgate, at the Manor Place (Duke's Place) of one of his former pupils, the young Duke of Norfolk, but he was soon at work with the enterprising John Day, and early in 1563 appeared the first English edition, in one large volume, of his "Acts and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Dayes, touching matters of the Church, wherein are comprehended and described the great persecutions

and horrible troubles that have been wrought and practised by the Romishe Prelates, especiallye in these Realms of England and Scotlande, from the yeare of our Lord a Thousande, unto the Tyme now present. Gathered and collected according to the true copies and *wrytinges certificatorie*, as wel of the parties themselves that suffered, as also out of the Bishop's Registers which were the doers thereof. By John Foxe."

With Day, Fox, after a time, went to live, but he also, at one period of his dwelling in London, had a lodging in Grub Street. At that time Grub Street, in Cripplegate, though not an aristocratic place of abode, was not associated with the disparaging reputation which began to attach to it at a later period, when it became a locality wherein the writers of small books, ephemeral party pamphlets, almanacks, and tradesmen's advertisements, found cheap lodgings.

Through the good offices of Cecil, Fox received a prebendal stall at Salisbury, though he was not in conformity with some still surviving tenets and ceremonies of the Roman Church. His connection with the printers and booksellers gave him a direct association with the restoration of Fleet Street as the Highway of Letters, even as his preaching at Paul's Cross renewed the memory of the days when, as a poor and almost penniless man, he may have paced the aisle of the great Cathedral, "dining with Duke Humphrey," and in constant fear of being included in the martyrdoms of which he was to become the most assiduous recorder.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY.

The Heavy Crown—Elizabeth in the Highway of Letters—Printers—Chroniclers—John Stow in Fleet Street—His "Annals," "Chronicle," and "Survey"—Thynne—Reprints of Chaucer—With Stow from Baynard's Castle to Temple Bar—Lord Pembroke—Elizabeth at Baynard's Castle—Dissolution of the Black Friars—Liberty of the Friary—Hunsdon House—Pollution of the Fleet—Conduits—Shoe Lane—Tankard Bearers—Lambe's Conduit—Fleet Street Taverns—Eating and Drinking—Venison—The Fleet Prison—Inns of Law—The Temple—Pageants, Masques, Comedies, Tragedies, Interludes—Dancing—The Dancing of Elizabeth—The "Pavo"—Gambling—"Primero"—"Noddy"—"Nine Men's Morris"—Salisbury Court—Sir Thomas Sackville—White Friars—"Sanctuary"—A New Temple Bar—Stowe a Typical Londoner—His Long Life and Labour—His Library—His Devotion to Letters—His Reward—His Monument.

CAP OF FOOL IN OLD PLAY.

"Be patient; it will seem lighter when it is on your own head," was the quick, subtle reply of Noailles, the French Ambassador, when the princess Elizabeth whispered to him that the crown which she carried before her sister, at Mary's coronation, was "very heavy."

Whether the acute diplomatist had observed

that the somewhat skittish, but still self-possessed and scholarly girl had in her character those qualities which would enable her to govern a nation at a turning point in its history, it is impossible to say. That she did possess them there can be little doubt, and it is noticeable that, while she inherited much of the personal assumption, the love of shows, pageants, and good company, and the talent for magnificence which distinguished her father, she also displayed some of that statecraft and self-contained power of temporising and of misleading, which was characteristic of the politic Henry VII.

She possessed her father's acuteness in reading character, and throughout her long reign, when artful and designing men thought they were deceiving her, it was she who, without apparent perception of their aims, was deceiving them. It was this faculty of perception of the motives and qualities of the men by whom she was surrounded which enabled her to choose her advisers wisely, when, at the age of twenty-five, she wore that crown of whose weight she had whispered five years before when she carried it at her sister's coronation.

The young Queen, having come from Hatfield on the 23rd of November, with a joyous escort of more than 1,000 persons, was met at Highgate first by the bishops, to each of whom she gave her hand to kiss, except Bonner. At the foot of Highgate Hill the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of London awaited her, and, joining her escort, conducted her to the Charter House, then the town mansion

of her friend Lord North. On the afternoon of the 28th she entered the City by Cripple Gate, and thence "rode in state along by the wall to the Tower," where she remained till Monday, the 5th of December,

MAP OF NEIGHBOURHOOD OF ST. PAUL'S IN 1540.

when she embarked in a state barge and with a brilliant retinue of attendants was rowed up the river to Somerset House, which had come into the possession of the Crown on the attainder of the Duke.

The 14th of January, 1559, had been fixed for the coronation, and that youthful, slight, but dignified and determined figure came to fill the place which could be filled by none else.

Again the bells are ringing, till the church towers rock. From every roof and spire flags are flying, from

every balcony in the great thoroughfares of Chepe, Ludgate Hill, and Fleet Street hang tapestry, carpets, strips of gaudy baize, silk, and velvet pile. At the great conduits are stationed allegorical shows, quaint devices, musiciáns, reciters of loyal odes. Tables are laid in every house, and in the very streets, and are spread with beef, brawn, capons, bread and cakes of all sorts. Wine is broached at the tavern doors, bottles and tankards of sack and canary are passed from hand to hand. Ale may be had for the asking. The City is full of splendid devices and pageants, in one of which appear the father and mother of the Queen, standing together, in complete oblivion of what has occurred since the fair Anne Boleyn went, amidst such a show, to her coronation.

The late troublous times had not, as we have seen, been favourable to increased activity in the world of letters, and the restrictions placed on printing by Queen Mary had not tended to the promotion of learning. Among the books prohibited by an Act of Parliament in the time of Philip and Mary, was Hall's Chronicle, of which four editions had been issued by Richard Grafton, printer to Edward VI. Early in the reign of Elizabeth the same printer issued "An Abridgment of the Chronicles of England," and a little book of a hundred leaves, with the big title, "A Manuell of the Chronicles of Englande from the Creacion of the Worlde to this Yere of our Lorde, 1565." This was followed by two folio volumes, in 1568 and 1569, of "A Chronicale at Large and Meere

History of the Affayres of Englande and Kings of the Same."

But a book entitled "A Summary of English Chronicles," by John Stow, published in 1561, was a serious rival to Grafton's book, and there was a lively contention, in printed prefaces, between the two compilers. Finally, Stow's large and elaborate work of 1,215 pages quarto, "Annales; or, a Generall Chronicle of England from Brute unto this Present Year of Christ, 1580," became the more important work, and is still a book of standard reference, while the others are little known. Of this there were several editions, one of them in 1631, twenty years after the author's death, and carried up to date by another hand.

The memory of John Stow should be ever revered in the Highway of Letters, where it would be fitting that a monument should be raised in his honour. He it was who, in 1561, prepared a complete edition of Chaucer, whose works, Stow himself tells us, "were partly published in print by William Caxton in the reign of Henry VI.; increased by William Thynne, Esquire, in the reign of Henry VIII.; corrected and twice increased through mine own painful labours in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, to wit, in the year 1561, and again beautified with notes by me, collected out of divers records and monuments, which I delivered to my loving friend, Thomas Speght; and he, having drawn the same into a good form and method, as also explained the old and obscure words, etc., hath published them in Anno

1597." It was in this edition that "Chaucer's Dream" and "The Flower and the Leaf" were first printed.

Stow's acquaintance with the history and antiquity of the buildings and monuments of the metropolis enabled him to achieve the work by which he continues to be as well known as by his "Annals." His "Survey of London" has long been indispensable to any writer who desires to make accurate reference to the antiquities and memorials, as well as to the topography and the older localities, of the City.

To see what was the general aspect of the Highway of Letters in the reign of Elizabeth we must, as it were, stand with Stow, as we stood with Chaucer and Gower, upon Fleet Bridge, and look once more beyond the Fleet Prison and what used to be the palace of Bridewell, towards Temple Bar. Baynard's Castle still stands, with its heavy square buttresses, its octagonal towers, its small, narrow windows in pairs, one above the other, its square court, and the bridge and stairs which give access to the river front.

The castle ceased to be a royal possession when, in the time of Edward VI., it became the residence of Sir William Sydney, the Royal Chamberlain; and from him it passed to William Herbert, first Lord of Pembroke, who married Anne, sister of Queen Catherine Parr. Pembroke was a judicious trimmer, appeared prominently in all the Court pageants, and was sent to meet Philip of Spain on his arrival in England. After the marriage of Philip and Mary, Pembroke came to London, and with goodly show

marched to Baynard's Castle, followed by a retinue of two thousand horsemen, in velvet coats with three laces of gold, and gold chains, besides sixty gentlemen in blue coats, with his badge of the Green Dragon. Pembroke had been among the promoters of the claims of Lady Jane Grey, but discreetly backed out when the plot became dangerous; went in with

PROPERTIES OF VICE AND FOOL IN OLD PLAY. (*From Douce's "Illustrations of Shakespeare."*)

tremendous enthusiasm for Queen Mary—whose supporters met at Baynard's Castle—and was foremost in the show at the coronation of Elizabeth, who appointed him Master of the Horse.

At a later day her Majesty went in state to a great entertainment and supper at the Castle, which she did not leave till the Earl handed her into her state barge at the Water-gate at ten o'clock at night, amidst a blaze of fireworks, the sound of music, and

a flotilla of boats, in which state her Majesty was attended by the Earl to Whitehall.

The church, precinct, and sanctuary of the Black Friars was surrendered to Henry VIII. in 1538, on the dissolution of monasteries, and his successor, the young Edward, having sold the hall and the site of the prior's lodgings to Sir Francis Bryan, afterwards granted "the whole house, site (or circuit compass), and precinct of the late Friars Preachers within the City of London," to Sir Thomas Cawarden, Master of the Revels. The yearly value of this grant was reckoned at nineteen pounds.

Though the precinct was secularised, the privilege of sanctuary remained, the place becoming a "liberty," in which certain special laws and regulations of the civic authorities were not enforced. The principal house in the Friary was Hunsdon House, called after her Majesty's cousin and Chamberlain, Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon.

The Fleet River had so degenerated, in consequence of the failure or stoppage of some of its sources of supply, but more from the constant pollution of the stream, that it was called Fleet Dyke, or ditch. It was partly covered in, and that portion of it which formerly flowed by the wall of the Fleet Prison was nowhere to be seen above ground. The cisterns and conduits were in full flow at the end of Shoe Lane, and the tankard-bearers had a busy time of it in conveying supplies of water to the houses in great vessels, holding about three gallons, and shaped like the frustum of a cone, having a small handle near the

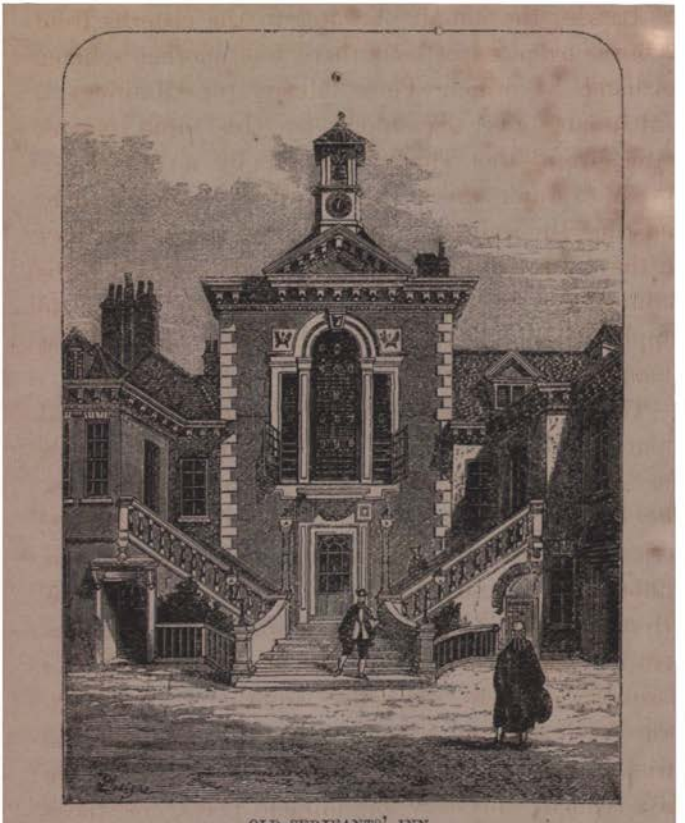
top, and closed by a plug or bung, so that they might be readily carried.

There were many conduits in the City, and one that had lately been rebuilt between Snow Hill and Holborn by Mr. William Lambe, late Gentleman of the Chapel to Henry VIII. This was supplied by another conduit, built by the same gentleman, at the north end of Red Lion Street, and called Lambe's Conduit.

The great increase of houses in the City was the cause of some of the former springs and wells being filled up and built over, and the Queen, like the late Queen Mary, set herself to forbid the adding of so many new dwellings to London, though she did not so strictly command that the number of taverns should be fewer. There were in Fleet Street and the neighbourhood many such places, the resort of gentlemen of some condition and of men of letters, who went there for the diversion of witty discourse and good company, as well as good eating and drinking.

The eating and drinking had, indeed, reached to such a height in the City that in 1554, in the late Queen's reign, the Corporation passed a law to restrain the extravagance and gluttony, commanding that no mayor, alderman, sheriff, or commoner should have at dinner or supper more than one course of six dishes, whether hot or cold, though one or two of the said dishes might be served hot after the first three or five were disposed of. Brawn, collops with eggs, salads, pottage, butter, cheese, eggs, herrings, sprats, shrimps, shell-fish, and unbaked fruit were "not to be

accounted for any of the said dishes above mentioned," and the restriction was to be removed when



OLD SERJEANTS' INN.

a foreign ambassador, or any of the Privy Council, should be of the party.

These sumptuary laws had been so little observed that the Court was offended at the enormous consumption of venison in the City, even at the taverns

and cookshops of Fleet Street and its tributaries, and venison was, therefore, left out of the bills of fare.

Besides the supply of water to the cisterns from Tyburn, by pipes of lead, there was another scheme in hand by which Peter Morris (or Maurice), a Dutchman, was to supply, by the same means, water from the Thames, raised by a *forcier*, or system of water-wheels standing near London Bridge; and thus the water was conveyed to the eastern part of the City; while another *forcier*, made by Bevis Bulmer, was to be set up near Broken Wharf, to supply Thames water into the houses about West Cheap, Paul's, and Fleet Street.

The Fleet Prison was unchanged in its evil reputation, as a place to which the High Court, or the "Star Chamber," could consign accused prisoners. The Inns of Law in Fleet Street were flourishing: Serjeants' Inn, with its namesake in Chancery Lane, Clifford's Inn, and the Inner and Middle Temple, "Houses of Court," where the students and members were as famous for their pageants and the acting of masques, comedies, tragedies, interludes, and histories, both true and feigned, as their forerunners, the parish clerks, once were for performing the old stage plays, called "mystery or miracle plays," or those more lately called "moralities."

In the masques eminent persons of the Court often took part, and at most of the entertainments dancing held an important place. Dancing, like music, was an accomplishment in which all sought to attain grace and skill, for it was the amusement

most in vogue, not in England only, but on the Continent of Europe, and Queen Elizabeth was herself famous for dancing "high and disposedly." A foreign ambassador from a Roman Catholic Court wrote, with real or simulated horror, that he had "seen the supreme head of the English Church *dancing*." The English courtiers and gentry were famous for the elegance, stateliness, and activity with which they gravely executed the most difficult steps and turns, like those of the "*pavo*" or "peacock," which was the favourite, and of course differed widely from those ruder gambols which were seen in the country, or about the maypoles in the City and elsewhere.

The students of the Courts of Law—who formerly were sharply rebuked for gambling at "push-groat" or "shovel-board"—were now to be found at "*primero*" and other games of cards borrowed from the foreigner, or at the more vulgar native accomplishments of "new cut," "banker out," "lodair" and "noddy"; while backgammon and "tables," or draughts, were as common in London as "nine men's morris" (or "merelles") was in the country and in the open playgrounds of the suburbs. "Shovel-board" or "shove-groat" was still played at the taverns or the lower gaming-houses, for it was the indoor form of "nine men's morris," only the "nine holes," instead of being cut in the turf of a village green or a meadow, were numbered divisions on a smooth table of wood, upon which a groat or silver penny was jerked from the palm of the hand in such wise that it might alight on a lucky number.

A larger cistern had at this time been placed at the standard at the south end of Shoe Lane, having a fine tower of stone, with an image of St. Christopher on the top, and angels standing round about with sweet-sounding bells before them, whereupon, by an engine placed in the tower, "they divers hours of the day and night chimed such an hymn as was appointed."

There had been great changes about Salisbury Court since the London inn of the Bishops of Salisbury came into possession of Sir Thomas Sackville, the Lord Treasurer. He enlarged it with stately buildings; and beyond Water Lane and the house called "The Hanging Sword," the former house and church of the White Friars, surrendered in the reign of Henry VIII., had given place to many fair houses, lodgings for noblemen and others. There still remained some fading and decaying tenements there, and the former privilege of sanctuary clung to the place and made it a resort for certain persons of low repute, though it was near to Serjeants' Inn, where the judges and learned serjeants of the law lodged in term time.

At the Temple sundry changes had been made by the repairing of the gate-house of the Middle Temple by Sir Amias Paulet, as we have seen, and by the rebuilding of the hall of the Middle Temple in 1572.

Temple Bar, too, which in the reign of Henry, when Queen Anne Boleyn went in State to Westminster, had been new painted, and a gate-house, or stage, erected for "divers singing men and children," was now newly built with a gateway, and above it a roofed structure of timber across the road.

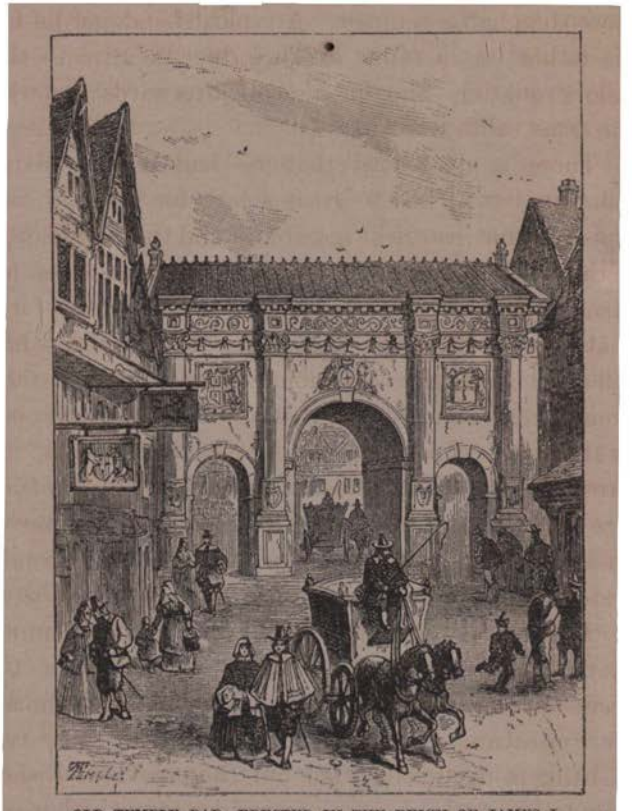
So let us part with old John Stow on Fleet Bridge, though Fleet Street will know him for years to come, even as it has known him as a constant chronicler for more than half a century. A typical Londoner he, for his father was a tailor in Threadneedle Street—the tailors' quarter—and he himself afterwards followed the same calling in Aldgate.

There is no record that he had a soul above tailoring, but he had so great a love for learning, and especially for historical researches and the compilation of the national chronicles, that he spent most of his earnings on books, and by the time that he was forty —at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth—had collected a library of curious volumes and devoted himself to the work which has made his name famous in the world of letters. "It is now eight years," he wrote, in 1573, "since I, seeing the confused order of our late English chronicles, and the ignorant handling of ancient affairs, leaving mine own peculiar gains, consecrated myself to the search of our famous antiquities."

He certainly does not seem to have gained much by the change, in a pecuniary sense, and after the accession of Elizabeth, when a search was being made for contraband, or Romish, books, he ran some risk of being sent to the Fleet, on the report of Bishop Grindal's emissaries, as "a suspicious person, with many dangerous and superstitious books in his possession."

Stow went on his way, however, for he was doing such good work, and troubled so little about other matters, that he was regarded as harmless, and was left to prove his loyalty in his own way.

So the tall, lean old man, with his clear, searching eyes, undimmed by all his poring over black-letter chronicles, his cheerful, placid face, his sober, mild,



OLD TEMPLE BAR, ERECTED IN THE REIGN OF JAMES I.

and courteous manner, and his remarkable memory, spent his life peacefully in the pursuit which he loved, travelling often on foot to visit cathedrals and other places where records might be found. The editor of

his "Annales" said of him, not long after his death—"He always protested never to have written anything either for malice, fear, or favour, nor to seek his own particular gain and vainglory; and that his only pains and care was to write truth."

He had, indeed, spent all he had of strength, learning, and money, when in 1603, at seventy-nine years of age, he applied for relief from James I., and received, as "*a recompense of his faithful labours and for the encouragement of the like*"—a licence to beg! That is to say, James granted him letters patent to collect "voluntary contributions and kind gratuities" amongst "our loving subjects," and headed the list with a contribution, the amount of which is not recorded. Stow did not live long enough to profit much by the "unusual manner" adopted for his relief in his old age. Two years afterwards he died, and his widow set up in the Church of St. Andrew Undershaft the monument of which we have already spoken.

It is strange to think of this quiet old enthusiast, moving so calmly in the Highway of Letters, amidst the changeful life and strenuous activities of those "spacious days of great Elizabeth." The dissemination of books by printing had not greatly advanced, for the restrictions placed on the publication of the literature of the time in England brought the business of English printers to a low ebb, and prevented them from so improving their art that they could stand comparison with the followers of the craft in France, Holland, and Germany, whence came many of the books sold in the shops of stationers in Fleet Street.

CHAPTER X.

THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING.

The Highway of Letters in the days of Elizabeth—Courtiers—'Prentices—Flattery and Fashion—Taverns in Fleet Street—High Living and High Thinking—Wigs and Ruffs—Shows and Amusements—Inn Yards—Stage Plays—Thames Watermen—From Temple Stairs to Bankside—Bankes—Tarleton—Defeat of the Armada—Procession from Somerset House to St. Paul's—First Coaches—Taylor, the Water Poet—The Queen at Black Friars—Rare Doings at the Horn Tavern—Witty and Wise at the Mermaid—Raleigh—Bacon—Buildings and their Occupiers in Fleet Street.

THE printing of many, or, indeed, most of the more striking productions of English philosophers, essayists, poets, and dramatists, in the reign of Elizabeth, was deferred till the latter part of her reign, or till after the accession of James the First. But the effects of that brilliant and exciting period—the opening of a new era in letters and the renewal of a struggle for increased freedom—coincident with a singular devotion and loyalty—were displayed in an advanced mode of thought, in power of expression, and by great achievements in the area of learning and of poetry, as well as by the splendid attainments, marvellous variety of faculty and literary ability, which distinguished leading courtiers and statesmen. Many of these were themselves famous contributors to the impetus which was raising the souls of men to a purer atmosphere of thought and a nobler aspiration after liberty.

The Queen herself was no mean judge of

pretensions to learning, or to the refinements of literature, though her occasional charm of manner alternated with a directness and strength of language which did not stop short at a round oath or two and somewhat rough threats. That she had a violent temper is evident from the record of her boxing the ears of her waiting-women, though it is also noted that she afterwards repented of her passionate rudeness. To a similar box on the ear, as a rebuke to the arrogant discourtesy of Essex in turning his back upon her when she contradicted him in the Council, is attributed the last furious outbreak and subsequent rebellion of that haughty spirit.

RICHARD TARLETON (*p.* 179). (*From an old Woodcut.*)

We sometimes find it difficult to understand how the courtiers of Elizabeth could continue to address her in the high-flown and extravagant terms which they habitually used in speaking or writing of her. Strange as it may appear, their utterances were not altogether insincere. Either they had come to regard her as a kind of earthly divinity, from being accustomed to speak and think of her in lover-like strains, or else her keen insight, ready tact, and

INNER COURT OF THE "BELLE SAUVAGE." (*From an Original Drawing.*)

the singular attractions of her youthful presence, had originally led them to make her the ideal representative of the power and influence of womanly grace, and the imperial supremacy of those attainments to which men of high perceptive faculty must ever yield reverence and loyal obedience.

The style of living in the time of Elizabeth was profuse; the fashion of dress among the higher classes was sumptuous and expensive. Laws were passed forbidding the London apprentices to wear costly apparel, or those ornaments and decorations which distinguished noblemen and gentlemen. But the London apprentices had already become an important body, and their cudgels and staves, when dexterously handled, as they knew how to handle them, were a match for what appeared to be more deadly weapons. No rules could have been effectual in preventing them from regarding themselves as an important part of the community, not only ready, but willing, to resent any insult or interference from members of the Court; and the cry of "Clubs! Clubs!" would raise a turbulent but organised assembly of youths, who, at the given signal, would leave shop and stall and join the main body against any attempted infringement of what they conceived to be their rights and privileges. The great body of City apprentices had long been a force to be reckoned with in any attempt to suppress the liberty of the subject between Temple Bar and the Tower.

Plainly as those dressed who were in a condition of servitude, Fleet Street, with its numerous shops, its

lively taverns, its gaudy signs swinging from the overhanging fronts of the gabled houses, was full of colour and movement. It was now not only the Highway of Letters, to which men of wit and learning resorted, and where they met for the interchange of news, and talk about books and the latest new poem or stage play, but it was also a highway for shows of curious and amusing objects, and for performances of various kinds.

Bankes, with his horse Marocco, who could show as much intelligence in his tricks as the learned animals of later times; Dick Tarleton, the famous jester and improvisatore, and other attractive entertainers, were to be seen there. The great inn yards, with their surrounding galleries, on which the upper rooms opened, were the scenes of performances similar to, if not identical with, the dramas which now began to find their way to two theatres on Bankside, Southwark. There the proprietors of the Stage Play-house and the Bear-garden took it in turns to give their afternoon performances, and Thames watermen did a busy trade in taking visitors across the river from the landing-stages at the Temple, Whitefriars, Puddle-dock, Queenhithe, or Dowgate.

Most conspicuous for the inn-yard entertainments in this locality of Fleet Street, was the Belle Savage Inn, about which, and the derivation of its title, and how the Bell, or Belle, came to be prefixed to the family name of Savage, so much has been written. The subject does not seem to have excited much attention till Steele, or Addison, took it up in the "Spectator,"

at which time the inn was called the "Old Bell (or Belly) Savage." The latest addition to speculation as to the origin of the name is that of the writer of these lines, who suggests that it was the Savage family inn, adjoining the Bail, or Bailey (outwork, or boundary) of New Gate, and was called the "Bail," or "Bailey" Savage, and afterwards the "Old Bailey Savage" Inn.

THE FOOL OF THE OLD PLAY. (*From Douce's "Illustrations of Shakespeare."*)

The fashion of male attire was as various as that of the ladies. The "trunk hose" had the upper portion, or breeches, either coming straight to the knee, or stuffed out to an inordinate size, so that the seats and benches of Parliament, or of halls and places of assembly, had to be widened to make room for them; the doublets had slashed sleeves, and were embroidered with silk and pearls; men wore velvet cloaks, jewelled buttons, and rows of gems for the neck, or as ornaments to hats, which were made of silk, velvet, beaver, or taffety; the starched ruffs were but a size or two smaller than those of the ladies, who carried great

fans of feathers, and mirrors hanging from their girdles, and abroad or at assemblies sometimes wore masks of black velvet, with glass eyes. In the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth, perfumed silken or linen gloves, embroidered with gold or silver, and stockings of knitted silk, were worn, the first pair of such stockings having been presented to the Queen, as a New Year's gift, to supersede the fine, but clumsy, stockings made of thin cloth. In the morning Fleet Street was full of life and colour, talk and laughter. The dinner, taken at midday, was the principal repast, and at the Court, and in the houses of noblemen and gentry, was a stately affair; the tables covered with fine napery, and the dishes mostly of silver. The wines were numerous, but stood upon a sideboard, each guest calling for a flask, or flagon, of that which he preferred. The gentlemen wore their plumed and jewelled hats on all occasions, except in exchanging courtesies, giving or acknowledging a toast, and in the presence of persons of much superior rank.

Ordinarily the courses of dinner were beef, mutton, venison, pork, poultry, and fish, but there was no fresh beef for more than half the year. The vegetables were usually salads of boiled coleworts, lettuce, cress, endive, angelica, and various herbs. The drink was mostly ale, claret, and sack or canary—sack being neither more nor less than sherry, or sometimes what we should call sherry "negus," sweetened with Muscovado sugar.

The common people, of course, fared more plainly, but ale was the ordinary drink, and was always taken

to sea for the crews of ships, where commanders like Drake and Raleigh also drank wine, and occasionally held a kind of state to show semi-savage people and foreign visitors, who knew something of costly ceremony, that the mariners of the Queen of England could have their food served on silver, drink their wine from flagons of plate and to the sound of a band of music, and yet be in accord with their free followers.

Some of these sea-captains and gentlemen-adventurers would be about Fleet Street after Drake's ship —which had been re-christened the *Golden Hind*, and had made the voyage round the world—was brought to Deptford, when the Queen went on board to a grand state banquet, and bestowed the honour of knighthood on the daring navigator, the avowed enemy of the Spaniard.

We may imagine the excitement of the multitude in the famous thoroughfare when, after the defeat of the Armada, Elizabeth and her brilliant Court went to St. Paul's to give thanks for victory. Hawkins, Drake, Winter, Frobisher, Palmer, Seymour, Southwell, Sheffield, Fenner, and others of name and fame, are in the list of those who shared the glories of that great sea-fight, and on this day of solemn thanksgiving the Queen rode from Somerset House to St. Paul's on a car or chariot of state, decked with streamers taken from the Spanish ships. She was attended by all the great officers of the Court, lords spiritual and temporal, her ladies of honour, and a vast assembly of nobility and gentry. From Temple Bar to the Cathedral the City Companies, in their

liveries, lined the way; the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, in scarlet robes, received her Majesty as she entered the Highway of Letters. The ladies, in gorgeous apparel, rode on palfreys or in litters, each borne between two horses.

The chariot, or coach, wherein the Queen rode was a sign of a new departure, much lamented by Stow, who tells how, of old time, on great occasions, ladies of high rank rode in open chariots, or "whirlicotes." No coaches were known—the palfrey and the litter were then the common conveyance for the weaker sex, when they did not ride on a pillion behind a servitor or gentleman of their own family. The whirlicote, or open chariot, may be likened to a modern lorry, or timber waggon, with a kind of ornamental framework, and seats placed upon it. A new coach which had been made for the Queen, and was driven by a coachman from Holland, was clumsy enough also, but it became a fashion, and each great lady must have her coach, though it was a lumbering affair, and the roads were so broken, boggy, and "noysome" that the new vehicles could be used for no distant excursions without considerable risk.

The watermen afterwards joined in this lament for the irruption of coaches, and especially one of them named Taylor, who had a marvellous knack of rhyming, and whose satirical verses survive to our own times. He inveighs in good round terms against the ruin to honest wherrymen caused by the coaches, which some call hell-carts, "drawn by the pamper'd jades of Belgia."

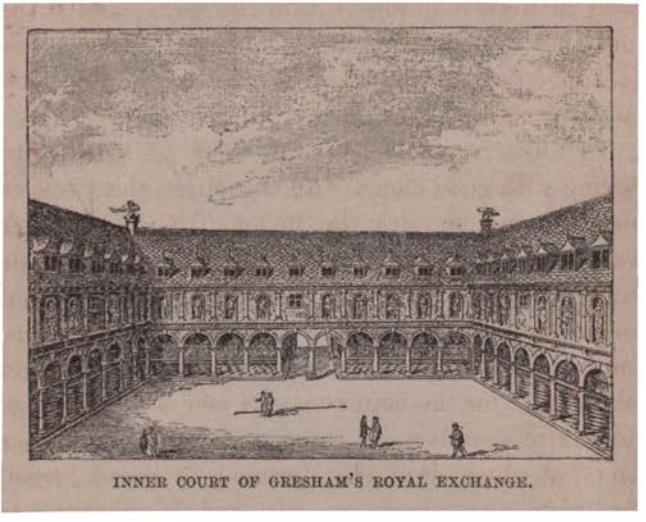
The Queen, grown old, but still bearing herself bravely, went to St. Paul's, and concluded the day by witnessing a masque at Lord Herbert's House at Blackfriars. Meantime there was much feasting in the City among liverymen and officers of the Corporation; at the houses of the nobles, who still dwelt in town mansions within the walls; and at the inns and taverns from Sir Thomas Gresham's new Exchange to the Outer Temple, near that house which had lately belonged to the Earl of Essex.

In Fleet Street the taverns were all aglow, and reeking with good cheer. At the Mitre, the Cock (a famous house for ale), the Bolt-in-Tun, the King's Head, near Chancery Lane, the Devil, close to Temple Bar, opposite St. Dunstan's Church, the Horn, that famous old house, which was left to the Goldsmiths' Company in 1405, by Thomas Atte Hay, citizen and goldsmith, "for the better support and sustentation of the infirm members of the Company,"* and other places, at which, as at the Mermaid, in Bread Street, Cheapside, the friends of wit and learning made merry company.

This Horn Tavern is mentioned in a book called "Father Hubbard's Tales," published in 1604:—"And when they pleased to think upon us, told us they were to dine together at the Horn, in Fleet Street, being a house where their lawyer resorted. . . . He embraced one young gentleman, and gave him many

*The Horn Tavern was, in the last century, converted into Anderton's Coffee House, and has been more recently rebuilt as Anderton's Hotel.

riotous instructions, how to carry himself; . . . told him he must acquaint himself with many gallants of the Inns of Court, and keep rank with them that spent most; . . . his lodging must be about the Strand in any case, being remote from the handicraft scent of the City. His eating must be in some



INNER COURT OF GRESHAM'S ROYAL EXCHANGE.

famous tavern, as the Horn, the Mitre, or the Mermaid, and then after dinner he must venture beyond sea—that is, in a choice pair of nobleman's oars to the Bankside, where he must sit out the breaking up of a comedy, or the first cut of a tragedy, or rather, if his humours so serve him, to call in at the Blackfriars, where he should see a nest of boys able to ravish a man." This was written at a date—a year after the death of Elizabeth—when the drama had already broken into a new and unexpected light;

when the advancement of learning had become a passion with men who, though they took a great and conspicuous part in the making of history, contributed not a little to the making of literature. Such a man was Raleigh, of the universal genius; such a man was Francis Bacon, the author of the "Novum Organum," whose making of history was the unmaking of his own manhood, and the profanation of his vast talents to the sordid betrayal of friendship and of honour.

This "wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind" seems to have lost moral fibre as he gained opportunities for acquiring wealth and influence. "Our young Lord Keeper," as Elizabeth used to call him, in reference to the office of his father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, had the courage, as member for Middlesex, to oppose some arbitrary measures, even at the expense of losing the Queen's favour; but when riches and honours came in his way he was associated with some of the most cruel and infamous accusations brought against the victims of Royal displeasure.

There was little improvement in the paving and lighting of the Highway of Letters at this time. The causeways ordered by Henry VIII. were kept more or less in repair, and there were ordinances for cleansing the footways, preserving certain open spaces, and lighting fires in the streets, as a remedy against the plague; but though during the reign of Elizabeth some admirable and beautiful examples of a new style of building appeared in country mansions and several of the more important of the town dwellings of

wealthy merchants and noble lords, the ordinary houses in such thoroughfares as Fleet Street were still of a rustic kind, with the upper storeys over-

FRONTISPIECE TO BACON'S "NOVUM ORGANUM," FIRST EDITION, 1620.

hanging, so that in narrow streets the opposite windows nearly met. The rooms, too, were mostly small, though some of the outer walls were of brick, slate, or tile, frequently covered with plaster

ornamented in elaborate and elegant patterns, and traversed by delicately-carved beams and timbers.

It must be remembered, however, that even the citizens of that day led an out-door life, and that there were not only large and well-kept gardens—and some places where the odours of pig-sties, cattle lairs, and other accompaniments of a town farmyard, were obvious to the senses—but also fields where sportsmen could hunt a fox or a hare, as the city magnates did between St. Clement's and St. Giles', when they made their official inspections of the cisterns and conduits between St. Paul's and the City boundary.

But if the ordinary houses were mean and the rooms small and low, the furniture and appointments were often luxurious, the tables covered with rich carpets, the walls hung with costly stuffs, the cabinets and chests of carved oak, and containing valuable plate and stores of goodly linen and apparel. The houses themselves resembled many which may still be seen in old country and cathedral towns—some of the most picturesque at Canterbury, where the creamy plaster, covered with arabesque designs, and the carved beams and sashes, are perhaps more effective than those with yellow plaster and black oaken beams, in the neighbourhood of "Carfax," at Horsham.

One of the best examples of the old houses close to Fleet Street, was that where, at a later date, Izaak Walton lived, near the corner of Chancery Lane, the decorated wood-work of which was exceedingly handsome. It was taken down about 1792 or 1793; and engravings of it are not uncommon.

BORDER FROM "THE MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES."

CHAPTER XI.

DRAMATISTS, PLAYS AND PLAYERS.

Common Plays and Players—Children of the Revels—The First English Comedy—Udall—Masques—Interludes—John Heywood—Rastell the Printer—*Gammer Gurton's Needle*—*Gorboduc*—Sackville at Salisbury House—Classical Learning—"The Mirror for Magistrates"—Thomas Norton—Sternhold and Hopkins—Origin of the "Old Hundredth"—Performances in the Middle Temple—Christopher Hatton—"Gloriana"—Spenser—Raleigh—Sidney—The "Arcadia"—Countess of Pembroke—The Euphuists—Lyly—*Campaspe*, played by "Her Majesty's Children"—Singing and Acting Boys—Opposition to Stage Plays—Licences and Privileges to Actors as "Servants" to Noblemen—The Earl of Leicester—Burbage's Company and the First Theatres—Sir Philip Sidney's Description of the Stage—Dramatists and Actors in Fleet Street—Peele—Greene—Marlowe—The Young Man from Stratford-on-Avon—Ben Jonson on Shakespeare—Absurd Stories about the Great Dramatist—Aubrey's Gossip—Testimony from Spenser, Jonson, and other contemporaries—The Theatre in Blackfriars—The Company of Players—Ben Jonson in the "Apollo" at the "Devil and Saint Dunstan" Tavern—Shakespeare's Early Plays.

IN the early part of the reign of Elizabeth there were few of what may be called public buildings, except taverns and inns, and there were no theatres

other than the inn yards, in which plays or interludes were presented by small companies of actors, who occasionally gave performances of such a profane or indecent kind as to bring the offenders before the Lord Mayor or some justice of the peace.

Dramatic performances of a higher character were to be seen only in out-door pageants, in the "moralities," or "masques," provided by the members of the Inns of Court or other public bodies, and at the royal palaces and mansions of the nobility, on state occasions.

The choristers and boys of St. Paul's School, and of Westminster and other schools, as well as of the Royal Chapels, were engaged to sing in the pageants, but they did more than this: they performed in some of the interludes, and were taught, not only to sing, but to play in sacred, and also in classical, dramas, the performance of which, as school plays, has lasted till our own time at Westminster and other ancient "grammar" schools. A number of these children were incorporated as an acting company, under the name of "The Children of the Revels," and among the boys were some who afterwards became famous as actors on the stage.

It has been said that children with good voices were sometimes kidnapped to make up the numbers required, and it is to be noted that boys and youths were needed to play the parts of women, no women appearing on the English stage till the end of the reign of Charles the First. Even after that time the practice continued of employing youths to play

women's characters, for we find, by Pepys' Diary, that after the Restoration young Kynaston was famous for acting female parts, and was such a favourite with the ladies who witnessed his performance that they used to take him out with them in their carriages after the play.

It would appear that the performance of classical plays by boys at the schools led to a departure from the former mysteries or interludes to something more like a regular drama; and it is remarkable that at first, as the Scriptural plays or mysteries were called indifferently "interludes," and "comedies," or "tragedies," without much reference to the meaning which we now attach to the two latter titles, so the earliest dramas were, with little distinction, called either "tragic comedies" or "comedies." It is equally remarkable that the first regular English comedy was written by Udall, the master of Eton, who was employed by Queen Mary to write a Court "interlude," or morality play. It is supposed that this drama, entitled *Ralph Roister Doister*, was intended by Udall to be performed by the Eton boys, and it is so inoffensive in its style and sentiment, that, as a kind of satire, to correct vainglory or swaggering self-conceit, it is (for that time) an admirable example of a school play, containing a good deal of quaint innocent fun.

Originally, the "masque" consisted of dumb show, and the "interlude" was spoken drama. A famous writer of the latter, in the time of Henry VIII., was John Heywood, whose book, "A Hundred Merry

Tales," was printed by Rastell, of Fleet Street, in 1525. Rastell, who was writer as well as printer, married a sister of Sir Thomas More.

Heywood's writings were very numerous, but he did not, as we have seen, originate the regular drama, and it is now pretty well settled that *Ralph Roister Doister* was the first regular comedy, though for some time the dispute was between Udall's comedy and a coarsely humorous and exceedingly gross play called *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, once supposed to have been written by Bishop Still, on the ground that the second act of the piece opens with the famous song in praise of ale:—

From the title-page to the Induction to the "Mirror for Magistrates," 1610.

> "I cannot eat but little meat,
> My stomach is not good—"

which has been, not untruly, called the first *chanson à boire* in the language. It is supposed, however, that this song was introduced into the play as a popular song of the time, and only a portion of it actually appears, the complete song having been found elsewhere, evidently of a so much earlier date that it has been attributed to Skelton.

There are some exceedingly good rough verses appointed to the characters in *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, of which the *motif* is the lending of the needle—a rather rare possession in country places in those days—and the relations of the persons concerned. One of the most picturesque characters is Diccon of Bedlam, a Bedlamite, or half-mad beggar, one of those numerous crazy, or pretendedly crazy, fellows who at that time roamed the country, chanting a kind of rude songs, and sometimes improvising jingle-jangles of half-nonsense, with here and there a touch of keen humour or observation.

RALPH ROISTER DOISTER. (*From a Sketch by Holbein in Erasmus's "Moriæ Encomium."*)

Ralph Roister Doister was certainly in existence in 1551, and *Gammer Gurton's Needle* probably not long afterwards, and certainly in 1575. A later edition of it in 1575 has on the title-page, "Played on the stage, not long ago, in Christ's College, Cambridge," giving the author as "Mr. S., Master of Arts."

But more important than either of these plays was that which was more truly the beginning of the English drama. *The Tragedy of Gorboduc, otherwise entitled the Tragedy of Ferrex and Porrex*, was first played in 1561, at the Christmas festivities at the Middle Temple, when the Lord of Misrule, otherwise the Master of the Revels—Sir Thomas Bangor, who had succeeded Sir Thomas Carwarden—rode through London "in complete harness, gilt, with a hundred horse and gentlemen riding gorgeously with chains of gold, and their horses goodly trapped." This was in the third year of the reign of Elizabeth. A revived taste for classical literature had already begun, and the printers in Fleet Street were busy issuing translations by eminent scholars, one of the most famous of whom was Arthur Golding, a Londoner, who lived in the house of Sir William Cecil, in the Strand.

Though *Gorboduc*, the first tragedy, was performed at the Temple in 1561, when many of the Queen's Council were present, no authorised edition of it was printed till 1571, when it appeared as *Ferrex and Porrex*. This famous and worthy beginning of the regular drama was written by Thomas Sackville, who as we have seen, had come into possession of Salisbury House, and was himself one of the members of the Middle Temple.

Sackville, whom Elizabeth afterwards made Baron Buckhurst and Earl of Dorset, succeeded Burleigh as Lord Treasurer. But his reputation as a scholar and a poet had begun when he was a youth at the

University, and was confirmed by his "Mirror for Magistrates," a series of typical accounts of the lives of various historical personages, in the manner of Lydgate's "Fall of Princes." Sackville's part of the work is distinguished for the remarkable strength and purity of the language and imagery, but he could not complete a task planned on such an extensive scale, and handed it over to Richard Baldwyn and George Ferrers, the latter a gentleman and scholar, author of some Court interludes, and, as already mentioned, Lord of Misrule to Edward VI. The "Mirror for Magistrates" afterwards received contributions from various writers, but the powerful and dignified commencement by Sackville is the most distinguished.

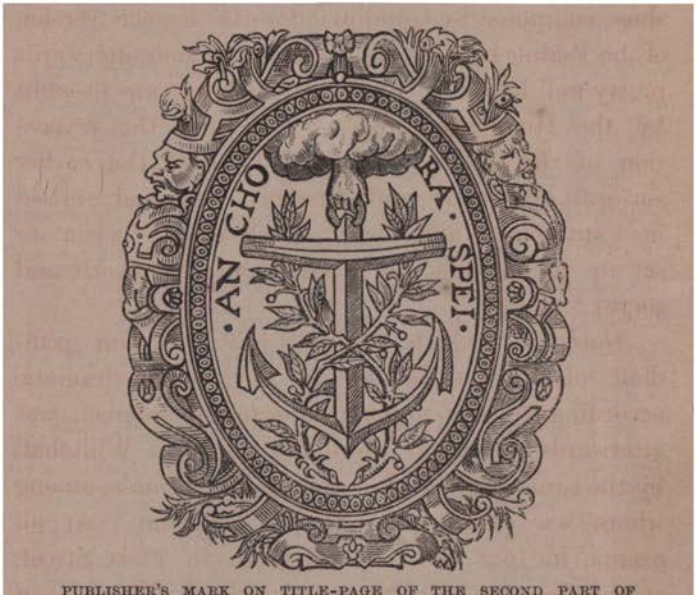
Gorboduc, the "argument" of which is from Geoffrey of Monmouth's "British Kings," is in blank verse, of so majestic and stately a character that it is worthy of the beginning of that form of verse which it may be said to have inaugurated, since Surrey's previous examples had taken no place in the popular estimation. Doubtless, as Charles Lamb has said, in his "Comments on English Dramatic Poets," Lord Buckhurst supplied the more vital parts of *Gorboduc*, but he was ably assisted in the opening portion of it by Thomas Norton, also a student in the Middle Temple, a strict Protestant and a good scholar, then about thirty years of age. In the same year in which *Gorboduc* was produced Norton published a translation of Calvin's "Institutes," and he had also been one of the translators who assisted

Sternhold and Hopkins in their version of the Psalms which appeared in the following year (1562) attached to the Book of Common Prayer. As an evidence of the communion of the Protestant Reformers in England with the Huguenots, it may be mentioned that the tune to the 100th Psalm in this version (the tune known as "The Old Hundredth") was one of those composed by Goudimal for the French version of the Psalms by Clement Marot—a version afterwards pretty well known in England, whither it was brought by the Huguenot refugees, who, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, followed the earlier *émigrés* (Walloons and French), who had settled in Canterbury, and there, as elsewhere, began to set up the manufacture of bays and seise (baize and serge).

Gorboduc, which, while it has a certain grandeur of diction, is not in any sense dramatic according to our notions of dramatic interest, was afterwards performed before the Queen at Whitehall by the same gentlemen of the Middle Temple, among whom was probably Christopher Hatton. At all events, in 1568, we find Elizabeth in Fleet Street, at the Temple, to witness a tragedy of *Tancred and Gismund*, taken from Boccaccio's story, and written by five gentlemen of the society, one of whom, the author of the third act, is Christopher Hatton, who, if not on this, on some other occasion, danced himself into the Queen's favour, and became her Majesty's Chancellor, the great Sir Christopher, of whom Gray says—

"His bushy beard, and shoe-strings green,
His high-crowned hat, and satin doublet,
Mov'd the stout heart of England's Queen,
Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it."

That Elizabeth loved dancing, and was proud of her own proficiency and grace in the "great and high" manner of saltation then in vogue, we have



PUBLISHER'S MARK ON TITLE-PAGE OF THE SECOND PART OF "THE FAERIE QUEENE."

already seen. There is a picture of "Queen Elizabeth Dancing" at Penshurst Place, Kent, the mansion of the Sidneys, which amuses, if it does not amaze, the visitor by the representation of "Gloriana," to whom her partner is, as children would say, "giving a jump."

Speaking of "Gloriana" suggests Spenser, another great Londoner, another haunter of the highway of Fleet Street and the Temple, the truest, sweetest, purest poet between Chaucer and Shakespeare, richly imaginative, but a descriptive rather than a dramatic writer.

Spenser went to Ireland as secretary to Lord Grey of Wilton, in that dark and dreadful conflict with the emissaries and invaders sent by Pope and Spaniard, which ended in a massacre of the foreign inciters to rebellion—"a sight to shudder at, not to see." The necessity for this deed of blood seems to have been demonstrated by Raleigh, and he was deputed to carry it out by command of Lord Grey, who was apparently jealous of the bold, able, and distinguished captain who had begun his public career as a volunteer aiding the struggle of the Huguenots in France.

In Ireland Raleigh and Spenser consolidated a friendship which was cemented, not only by their strong Protestant principles and by their being of the same age, but by the accomplishments in versification in which they were sympathetically proficient. Spenser's original friend and patron was one whose name stands as an example, not only of high and delicate chivalry, but of literary achievement, the fame of which still lives. Sir Philip Sidney, the author of "Arcadia" and "The Defence of Poesie," was but thirty-two when he died of the wound he received at the battle of Zutphen. We have all read the charming anecdote of his handing the

bottle of water, from which he was about to drink as he lay bleeding on the field, to the poor soldier, who was looking at it with longing eyes, and to whom he said, "Thy necessity is yet greater than mine.

Mary, the sister of Sir Philip, was wife of the Earl of Pembroke. She outlived him, and her epitaph was written by Ben Jonson, in the well-known lines in which there is a reference to her son, the young Earl—

> "Underneath this sable hearse
> Lies the subject of all verse—
> Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother;
> Death, ere thou hast slain another
> Learn'd and fair and good as she,
> Time shall throw a dart at thee."

She was herself an accomplished writer, and the brother and sister, who were deeply attached to each other, translated the Psalms together into English verse. It was for his sister, and at her request, that Sidney wrote the "Arcadia."

Sir Henry (his father), and he also, interested themselves in the fortunes of young Edmund Spenser. Sir Philip had been in France when he was little more than seventeen, had been profoundly affected by the Huguenot cause, and heartily espoused it. He was in Paris during the massacre of the Protestants on St. Bartholomew's Day, and was obliged to seek refuge in the house of Sir Francis Walsingham, the English Ambassador. On his return to England, after some months of foreign travel, the Queen appointed him ambassador to the Emperor

Rudolph. It was in 1580 that he sought retirement with his sister at Wilton, where he wrote the "Arcadia," for he had remonstrated with the Queen against her proposed marriage with the Duke of Anjou, and had retired from the Court; but in 1582 he received the honour of knighthood, and in 1585 was appointed Governor of Flushing and General of the troops sent to the assistance of the United Provinces. So great was his reputation, indeed, that he was thought to be a suitable candidate for the crown of Poland, but Elizabeth (probably for more than one reason) objected, and would not consent to lose "the jewel of her dominions."

THE RED-CROSS KNIGHT. (*From the first edition of "The Faerie Queene," 1590*).

Sidney's "Defence of Poesie" was directed against the conceits and affectations of the "Euphuists," the followers, and professed followers, of Lyly, whose "Euphues" was said to introduce a new language, with its new words, conceits, and periphrases.

It is pretty certain, however, that Lyly himself had it in mind to refine and improve the language, which in its older form of expression had sometimes to be explained by glossaries in the printed editions of former books. The excess of fantastic metaphor and far-fetched allusion and expression, however, soon made it necessary to have an explanation, or glossary of *new* words in the Euphuistic literature.

We could well forgive Lyly if he had written nothing worth preserving but the charming verse with which modern readers are familiar, though they may not be familiar with the dramas, from the first of which, *Campaspe*, it is taken:

> "Cupid and my Campaspe played
> At cards for kisses; Cupid paid.
> He stakes his quiver, bow and arrows,
> His mother's doves, and teams of sparrows;
> Loses them too; then down he throws
> The coral of his lip, the rose
> Growing on's cheek (but none knows how),
> With these the crystal of his brow,
> And then the dimple of his chin;
> All these did my Campaspe win.
> At last he set her both his eyes;
> She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
> O Love! has she done this to thee?
> What shall, alas, become of me?"

Campaspe was played before the Queen by "Her Majesty's Children" of the Royal Chapel St. James's, and the "Children of Paul's." Philip Sidney, who, yet a boy, had taken part in the performance of a masque before her Majesty, at Whitehall, had afterwards written one—and a very pretty and delicate one—for her entertainment. He had been married

only three years, to the daughter of Walsingham, when he died, in 1586.

Up to 1576, though plays were performed for the entertainment of the Queen both at Whitehall and other royal residences, and in colleges and halls whenever she paid visits to the nobility or to the seats of learning, there were no regular theatres worthy of the name. Companies of players, like the gentlemen or children of the schools and chapels, who were known by the name of their schools, were obliged to rehearse their plays to the Master of the Revels before performing them.

Other companies of actors were the "servants" or entertainers of various lords and noblemen, whose name they took, and who were granted licences for them to play in public for their own profit in inn yards, town halls, or sheds and barns erected or utilised for the purpose.

From the first the players had to encounter opposition from some of the clergy and from the civic authorities of London, partly on the alleged score of morality, and because the performances were sometimes held on Sundays and holidays, and partly on account of the danger of drawing together a number of people during the time of plague or other sickness. This was the case in 1563, when above 21,000 persons died of the plague in London, and Archbishop Grindal advised Sir William Cecil to forbid all public plays for a year, and (he added) if it were for ever it would not be amiss.

But dramatic performances had taken a firm hold

on the public taste, and the nobility, even the most learned and sober of them, went to witness plays whenever they were acted in a suitable place, and were to be performed by actors of known ability. In 1572 it was enacted that fencers, "bear-wards," common players in interludes, and minstrels not belonging to any baron of the realm, or to any other honourable personage of greater degree, should be treated as rogues and vagabonds if they had not the licences of at least two justices of the peace.

Two years afterwards the Earl of Leicester obtained a special privilege or patent from the Queen for his servants, James Burbage, John Perkyn, John Lanham, William Johnson, and Robert Wilson, to play interludes, comedies, tragedies, and stage plays within the City of London and its liberties, or any other city, without let, provided that the said plays, etc., were first submitted to the Master of the Revels for the time being, and that they were not published or shown in the time of common prayer or in the time of great and common plague in the City of London. The City authorities stood out against this order till a letter from the Privy Council to the Lord Mayor commanded that the players should be admitted to the City and otherwise favourably used. Then the Common Council frustrated the hopes of the players, by passing regulations that a licence should be obtained from the Lord Mayor before each performance, and that half the profits should be given up for charitable uses. So persistently did the civic authorities oppose the players that the matter was long argued between the

Corporation and the Privy Council, till Burbage, in 1576, bought a piece of ground beyond Bishopsgate, and outside the jurisdiction of the City, whereon he built "The Theatre" in Holywell Lane, Shoreditch, afterwards called the "Curtain Theatre," from which the "Curtain Road" in the same locality took its name.

TAIL-PIECE FROM LYLY'S "EUPHUES" (EDITION OF 1579).

This was before the "Globe," on the south bank of the Thames (in 1594), the "Rose," built by Henslowe in 1584: the "Paris Garden," converted into a theatre at a still later date by Henslowe and Alleyn: or the "Swan," in the same locality, drew the rank and fashion of the Highway of Letters to the Thames wherries, which conveyed multitudes of passengers across the river to Southwark on those afternoons when plays were performed on Bankside. As the population of London was above 150,000, these theatres were well supported by audiences who could take their pleasure after the usual dinner-hour, at twelve or one o'clock, and reach home before nightfall.

The drama was not much assisted, either by scenery or costumes, in the earlier days of the regular theatre. "Now," says Sir Philip Sidney, "you shall see three ladies walk to gather flowers, and then we must believe the stage to be a garden. By-and-bye

we hear news of a shipwreck in the same place; then we are to blame if we accept it not for a rock. Upon the back of that comes out a hideous monster with fire and smoke; then the miserable beholders are bound to take it for a cave. While, in the meantime, two armies fly in, represented with four swords and two bucklers; and then what hard heart will not receive it for a pitched field?"

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.*

Occasionally there was so little aid to the imagination, that a placard was hung on the front of the stage, inscribed with the name of the place in which the action was supposed to go on. To give a familiar example—

> "The King is set from London; and the scene
> Is now transported, gentles, to Southampton."

Or, as sufficient apology for the want of an army—

> "Can this cock-pit hold
> The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
> Within this wooden O the very casques
> That did affright the air at Agincourt?"

Many of the men who had entered the world of letters, and were writing stories and pamphlets for the printers in Fleet Street, had begun to see that they could appeal more directly to the public, among

* From the title-page, "The Trueness of the Christian Religion." Translated by Sir P. Sidney and A. Golding, 1592.

whom there were still comparatively few buyers and readers of books, by writing for the actors. The man of letters in those days, and down to a very much later period, could scarcely hope to live by his writings, unless he secured the aid of a noble or wealthy patron; but the stage, and a successful play, promised some immediate if not very great reward, with the additional attraction of a certain degree of independence.

Peele, Greene, and Marlowe were already in Fleet Street, and printers like Richard Tottell, then master of the Stationers' Company, published some of their dramas. Marlowe, whose tragedies (wild and extravagant as some of the language seems to be) displayed marvellous force and splendour of imagery, was recognised as the head of the dramatists, and but for his erratic life and his early death in a street brawl, might have been the companion of men of power and influence.

But in the year when Sidney died (in 1586), when Bacon was twenty-six years old, and Spenser and Raleigh each thirty-four, a young man was about to set out from Stratford-on-Avon who would, by his genius, make a new era in the world of letters, and whose work would survive that of most, as it transcended that of every one, of his contemporaries. William Shakespeare, who was then twenty-two years old, was about to try his fortune in London, and it is certain from the evidence of his plays, and from the knowledge we possess concerning his friends and companions, that his were among the most frequent

footsteps in the Highway of Letters, near which he lived and worked, and in the vicinity of which many of the persons to whom he introduces us had "heard the chimes at midnight." There has always existed a well-founded popular recognition of the claims of Shakespeare as the greatest of English dramatists, and one of the greatest of English poets. Passages from his plays have grown into the English language—have become aphorisms "familiar in our mouths as household words." We use his apt, pungent phrases for illustration when we would be witty; his solemn, pathetic language when we would appear to be wise. His tender, beautiful metaphors, and strong, sympathetic references to human hopes fears, and sentiments, come next to the words of sacred Scripture in our thoughts when we are stirred by strong emotion. It frequently happens that words from a drama of the robust and reverent writer of "stage plays" are quoted, even by devout people, as those of Holy Writ, while it is not uncommon for a text of the poetical or epigrammatic portions of Scripture to be attributed to Shakespeare.

When thinking of the wondrous genius of the poet, we are most of us ready to say, as Milton said:—

> "Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
> What needst thou such weak witness of thy name?
> Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
> Hast built thyself a lifelong monument."

And yet we have, as it were, some sense of the living personality of Shakespeare as associated with his plays. We can see him amidst the wit-combatants at the

Mermaid, or at one or other of the taverns in Fleet Street, and we think of him as Ben Jonson thought—who was his boon-companion and admiring friend—and spoke of him as "Sweet Will" and "*My* Shakespeare," as well as eulogising him in the lines which say:—

RICHARD BURBAGE. (*From the Portrait in Dulwich College.*)

"... How far thou didst
our Lyly outshine,
Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.
And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,
From thence to honour thee I will not seek
For names; but call forth thundering Æschylus,
Euripides, and Sophocles to us,
Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova, dead
To live again, to hear thy buskin tread,
And shake a stage; or, when thy socks were on,
Leave thee alone for the companion
Of all that insolent Greece and haughty Rome
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.
Triumph, my Britain! Thou hast one to show
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not for an age, but for all time!
And all the Muses still were in their prime
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm.
Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines."

There is something characteristic in big Ben's allusion to the "small Latin and less Greek" possessed by the

friend whom he loved "only on this side idolatry," for Ben was a great classic scholar, and had brought from the University the list of names that appear in his lines; and he may well have found the opportunity of showing his own acquirements irresistible, and at the same time have thought but little of the classical knowledge possessed by the man whose early instructions had been those of the Grammar School of Stratford-upon-Avon.

It is, at the first glance, remarkable that, though these striking references to Shakespeare, and to his acknowledged eminence as playwright and poet, were made by his contemporaries and by distinguished writers who succeeded them, more recent popular notions concerning his personal history should have been founded mostly on vague stories, or gossiping and untrustworthy traditions, some of them adopted from supposed references in his own plays to his early experiences. It has been insisted that he was a ne'er-do-well—a reckless, wild spark, addicted to deer stealing, to haunting taverns, and to writing scurrilous verses, and that having fled to London to avoid the consequences of his escapades, he gained a precarious livelihood by holding the horses of the visitors who went to witness the performances at the theatres on Bankside; that he afterwards obtained a footing on the stage as a supernumerary actor, and that during this time of penury he either had in his pocket, so to speak, one or more of the marvellous dramas which were afterwards to make his transcendent genius known to the world, or that the real writer of those

inimitable productions induced him to pretend to be their author, and to keep up the fiction for the remainder of his life. That he rose to fame from a low estate, and sordid, if not actually vicious, surroundings, has almost always been taken for granted, even by some of his most enthusiastic admirers; and it is easy to perceive that these supposed circumstances enhanced the estimate which was formed of his extraordinary ability by those who, like Dr. Johnson, accepted, with little question, the illusory and unscrupulous gossip of Aubrey, endorsed, with some additions, by later anecdotists and commentators.

It is of course to be regretted that there exists nothing that can be said to be an authentic biographical sketch of Shakespeare. In his day there was little contemporary biography. Only persons of distinction in the State, or having associations with great men or events, had their lives written. The "interviewer" had not been discovered or invented, and there were no newspapers in which, by artfully-concocted paragraphs of personal intelligence, the name of an eminent author or actor was kept before the public, and his fame enhanced by means of small-beer chronicles of his daily life.

It may be said that the conditions by which a man can achieve the kind of reputation which consists in being extensively advertised, scarcely existed in Shakespeare's time, and that testimonials and complimentary banquets to eminent dramatists and players had scarcely been thought of; but there are evidences that Shakespeare was satisfied to keep the

even tenour of his way, without seeking to establish his fame by contemporary "notices." It would appear, from all that we can gather of his history, that he came to London to try his fortune at the theatres. Stratford-upon-Avon had, during his childhood, been frequently visited by companies of players, who were held in much repute there, and were usually engaged by the authorities of the town to perform in the Town Hall, or some convenient building, for the amusement of the inhabitants.

It may be remembered, too, that not Shakespeare alone, but Burbage, Greene, and one or two other well-known actors, with whom he was associated, were also Stratford men, and had already begun to prosper fairly well, before Shakespeare, with his growing marvellous faculty of taking some brief old skeleton of a story and making it into a powerful living drama, full of human interest, sought to find such work to do in London for the purpose of maintaining his young family at Stratford.

His was not an immediate success. He had been for some five or six years at work before he achieved his purpose, and acquired money enough to retire to the place of his birth, after having purchased one of the best houses in the town, and enough property in adjoining parishes to make him a person of some importance.

In the interval he was a shareholder with Burbage in the Globe Theatre, and made frequent journeys to Stratford. He had achieved much of his greatest work before Spenser died, and, like Spenser,

had succeeded in rescuing English drama and poetry from the trivialities of the Italian writers, whose stories were becoming popular, and against whom Spenser had raised the English standard which had been handed down by Chaucer.

In "Colin Clout's Come Home Again," where Spenser's shepherd describes Elizabeth and the famous personages of the Court, the poet does not forget Shakespeare:—

> "And there, though last, not least is Aëtion.
> A gentler shepherd may nowhere be found,
> Whose Muse, full of high thought's invention,
> Does like himself heroically sound."

It is to be noted that Shakespeare was spoken of by men of such different mental constitutions as Jonson and Spenser as "gentle;" and though it may be remarked that the word then often signified "well-born," or "well-mannered," it seems to have been also intended to express the meaning which we now attach to it.

When we desire to know with certainty what was the personal appearance of Shakespeare, we are confronted at first with a difficulty in assimilating the several portraits which have been brought forward as authentic representations of him; but even here a little inquiry, aided by some references to his contemporaries, pretty well establishes his identity. It may be recorded that the "Chandos" portrait, which belongs to the nation, and is usually accepted as the likeness of "The Bard," and has a very complete pedigree, supported by documentary evidence, is in

many respects less satisfactory than the engraving which was prefixed to the folio edition of Shakespeare's works, published in 1623. This portrait, which was the work of Martin Droeshout, has, at all events, something in common with the bust of the poet in Stratford Church, making allowance for the

THE GLOBE THEATRE (*temp.* ELIZABETH).

necessary difference between a print and a coloured bust, and considering also that Droeshout is said to have taken the likeness when Shakespeare was "in character," or, at all events, in the dress in which he had played an old man.

The important authentication of this engraved portrait is to be seen in the verse which was written by Ben Jonson to be printed under it, as it stood in

the first folio, in the place where we now put the frontispiece. The verse was signed "B. J.," and has been reprinted in Ben Jonson's works:—

"To the Reader.

"This figure that thou here see'st put,
It was for gentle Shakespeare cut;
Wherein the graver had a strife
With Nature to outdo the life.
Oh! could he but have drawne his wit
As well in brasse as he hath hit
His face, the print would then surpasse
All that was ever writ in brasse;
But since he cannot, Reader, look
Not on his picture, but his Booke."

William Shakespeare was a young married man with a family, and had been for about four years in London, where he had engaged himself as one of the company of players at the theatre in Blackfriars, which had been built in 1576 "by James Burbage" and others, at the spot which keeps the name of "Playhouse Yard" to the present day.

This James Burbage, a Stratford-upon-Avon man, father of the more celebrated Richard Burbage, Shakespeare's subsequent friend and fellow-actor and manager, was at the head of that small company licensed under a writ of the Privy Seal as servants of the Earl of Leicester, "to use, exercise, and occupy the art and faculty of playing comedies, tragedies, interludes, stage-plays, and such other like as they have already used and studied, or hereafter shall use and study, as well for the recreation of our beloved subjects as for our solace and pleasure when we shall

think good to see them." Such a patent was necessary to prevent actors from being arrested or molested by the civil authorities, and especially by the civic authorities, under the enactment of the 14th of Elizabeth, "for the punishment of vagabonds and the relief of the poor and impotent," which has been held to be a protective Act to distinguish the regularly licensed players and musicians from rogues and vagabonds, many of whom infested the country under the guise of strolling players. The Act was directed only against those who could "give no reckoning how he or she doth lawfully get his or her living. . . All fencers, bearwards, common players in interludes, and minstrels not belonging to any baron of this realm, or towards any other honourable personage of greater degree; all jugglers, pedlars, tinkers, and petty chapmen; which said bearwards, common players in interludes, minstrels, jugglers, pedlars, tinkers, and petty chapmen shall wander abroad and not have licence of two justices of the peace at the least, whereof one to be of the quorum, where and in what shire they shall happen to wander."

The Blackfriars Theatre was established among the dwellings of persons of distinction, not far from the City walls, but in a "liberty" not within the control of the City officers. The Lord Chamberlain, who does not seem to have objected to it, and Lord Hunsdon, who *did* object to the confusion and disturbance of the carriages taking people to the playhouse, were near neighbours of the theatre. That structure was, in fact, only a portion of a tenement

adapted to the purposes of a theatre, and it was known as "The Winter" Theatre, because it was a roofed building, whereas the theatres on Bankside were summer theatres, only roofed over the stage,

FROM THE TITLE-PAGE TO ROBERT GREENE'S "GROUNDWORK OF CONEY CATCHING."

and with the auditorium left open to the sky. This was really a perpetuation of the theatre formed by the old inn yard, where the occupants of the *rooms* opening from the surrounding gallery looked down upon the players, who had their stage in the open space, where the "groundlings" stood to witness the performance.

By the year 1589, three years after his coming to London, William Shakespeare was not only one of "Her Majesty's poor players," but, as one of those poor players, was one of the sixteen sharers in the Blackfriars Theatre—James Burbage and his son Richard, John Lanehaм, Thomas Greene, Robert

OLD THEATRE CHECK.

Wilson, John Taylor, Anthony Wadeson, Thomas Pope, George Peele, Augustine Phillipps, Nicholas Towby, William Shakespeare, William Kempe, William Johnson, Baptiste Goodale, Robert Armyn—these are the names in the order in which they appear. They were actors (Richard Burbage the greatest actor of his time), and several of them authors, poets, and dramatists. Some of them are still known by their works, but none except Shakespeare achieved a fame which "was not for an age, but for all time."

It has been conjectured that Shakespeare's first play, the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, did not appear till 1591. That he made what would now be called

a "sensation" when he began, first probably to adapt and re-cast, and then to write dramas for the theatre in which he had been actor, and perhaps assistant to Burbage, is shown by the jealous and violent attack made upon him by Robert Greene (not Thomas Greene) in his "Groats-worth of Wit," a reference which Henry Chettle, who published the book after Greene's death, soon expressed his regret for not having erased, "Because myself having seen his (Shakespeare's) demeanour no less civil than he excellent in the qualities he professes; besides divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in enacting that approves his art."

By the time that the Blackfriars Theatre was rebuilt in 1596, Shakespeare had indeed "approved his art." He and Richard Burbage and the rest of the sharers in the new undertaking, in petitioning the Privy Council, called themselves "owners and players of the private house or theatre in the Precinct, or Liberty, of the Blackfriars." Judging from the actual dates at which Shakespeare's plays were printed or had been alluded to by other writers, several of his dramas had been performed. *Henry VII.* (Part I.) was alluded to by Nashe in "Pierce Pennilesse" in 1592. *Henry VI.* (Part II.) was printed as *The First Part of the Contention*, in 1592: the third part of the same play as *The True Tragedy of the Duke of York*, in 1595. *Richard II.*, *Richard III.* and *Romeo and Juliet* were printed in 1597. All these were published in quarto form.

The *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the *Comedy of Errors* (probably in 1592), and, it is supposed, *Love's Labour's Lost*, had been written before these dates. In 1593 *Venus and Adonis* had appeared in print, dedicated to the young Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. Shakespeare himself calls *Venus and Adonis* "the firstborn of my invention," so that it was written some time before its publication. *Lucrece* was dedicated to the same patron in 1594.

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE GLOBE THEATRE.

It would be interesting to trace the career of some of the intimate friends and admirers of Shakespeare did space permit. Of Burbage, the chief associate, to whose aid and ability perhaps Shakespeare, and certainly the English drama, owed much, it may be mentioned that he left landed estate producing three hundred pounds a year, or equal to about one thousand two hundred pounds in the present day he was buried in the church of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, and the inscription on his tomb is short and expressive:—

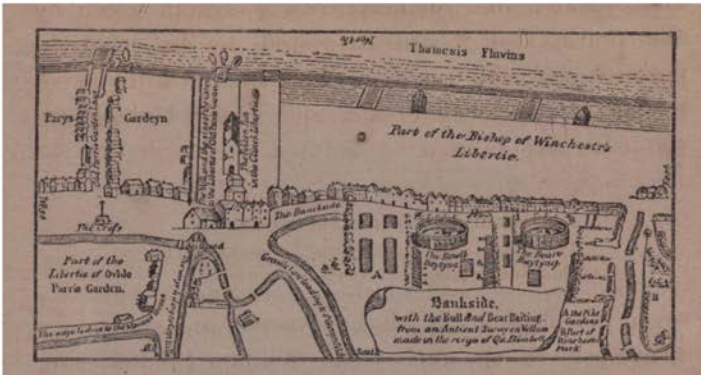
"Exit Burbage."

His memory, like Shakespeare's, was kept green by the praise and regard expressed by his contemporaries; but there is something inexpressibly sweet in the tributes to the greater, and, it may be believed, the more lovable man.

> "Sweet Swan of Avon, what a sight it were,
> To see thee in our waters yet appear,
> And make those flights upon the banks of Thames
> That did so take Eliza and our James,"

wrote Ben Jonson, in his fine verse "to the memory of my beloved, the author, Mr. William Shakespeare, and what he hath left us." These manly words seem to show us what Shakespeare was—to bring before us the club at the Mermaid, the companionship in the Highway of Letters, with its wit and graceful persiflage. They sound the keynote of all the tender regret and honest eulogium that followed the name and memory of William Shakespeare.

TAILPIECE FROM THE "MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES."


Thamesis Fluvius
Parys Gardeyn
Part of the Bishop of Winchestr's Libertie.
The Bankside
The Rose playing
The Swan playing
Part of the Libertie of Oelde Parys Garden.
Bankside.
with the Bull and Beat Baiting.
From an Antient Survey in William
made in the reign of Qu. Elizabeth

PLAN OF BANKSIDE EARLY IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER XII.

THE "SEPARATISTS" IN BRIDEWELL.

Early Nonconformists—The Church formed in Bridewell Prison—Persecution of the Separatists—Gaol Fever—Fitz—Barrowe—Greenwood—The Queen's Compunction—Predecessors of the Pilgrim Fathers—Preston's *Cambyses*—Shakespeare's Plays Printed—The Impending Fate of Raleigh—King James on his way to London—The Star Chamber—Sir Robert Killigrew and the Countess of Dorset in the Fleet Prison—Prosecutions of Printers—Secret Publications—Pamphlets and Libels—The Rule of Elizabeth and of James I. compared.

It may be easily understood that among the prisoners in the Fleet in the reign of Elizabeth, the Protestant Nonconformists, or Dissenters, were among those who were most harshly treated, and were kept longest without trial. The number of them soon became so great that the Marshalsea and the Clink, in Southwark, would not suffice for the committals.

A number of these earnest men were in no way

associated with sedition or political controversy, but they claimed the right of expounding the Scriptures for themselves, and worshipping according to their notions of the Primitive Church of the Apostles. They were, in fact, advocates of the formation of distinct Christian associations or Churches, separate from the authority of worldly rulers, so far as their religious observance was concerned, and choosing their own pastors and teachers, governed by the laws of Christ as laid down in the New Testament.

It seems, therefore, that these were the first "Independents"—a name which was not assumed till a later date, but one which came to have a striking significance when it represented a body of men of whom Oliver Cromwell himself was the leader, and whose achievements became proverbial, their swords invincible.

In the days of Elizabeth the English Reformers who remained in the Church, though they were disappointed that the principles of the Reformation were not carried out, and who sought by political influence to effect the removal from the service book of those matters to which they objected, were quite a different body from the "Separatists," of whom we have just spoken. The latter were called, not only Separatists, but "Brownists," a sneering title derived from the name of one of their body—a clergyman who, after adopting their views, deserted them and accepted a living in Northamptonshire.

The Separatists, however, increased in numbers; they had nothing to do with political expediency;

their religious convictions had no connection with political disorder: they professed and practised consistent and unswerving loyalty to the Crown, and yet were constantly accused of sedition, which they utterly denied and any proof of which they repeatedly challenged. They had no stated places of worship, for they would not have been suffered to meet in them, but in summer they assembled in the fields or woods, and in winter in private houses, some of which were in the City. For a long time they had no pastors, but some of their number "expounded out of the Bible so long as they were assembled." Their proceedings appear to have been like those of the Sandemanians of our own day, of which body Faraday was a constant and devout member. In 1567 a company of "Separatists," meeting at Plummer's Hall, in Laurence Pountney Lane, were brought before the Lord Mayor and committed to Bridewell Prison. Here they formed themselves into a regular church, and chose a pastor and deacons. Richard Fitz, the first pastor, one of the deacons, and many of the members, died of gaol fever, or "prison plague," but the church lived on.

Other leaders of these primitive Churches, or religious associations, were committed to other prisons, along with felons, murderers, and maniacs. After long imprisonment several were executed, with only the semblance of a trial. Many of them were men of high education and intelligence. Henry Barrowe, a student of Gray's Inn, and John Greenwood, educated for the Church, both scholars of Cambridge

University, were at the Clink Prison, in Southwark. Barrowe, who was of an aristocratic family in Norfolk, had gone to the Clink to see his friend, and found himself a prisoner, by order of the Bishop of Winchester, whose ecclesiastical authority and property was in the district of Bankside, and Southwark—an unsavoury locality morally and physically. There,

OLD HOUSES AT BANKSIDE.

amidst foul air, foul companions and privations intended to subdue them to conformity, the companions encouraged each other to constancy, and wrote on scraps of paper the first treatises of Nonconformist literature. These were carried out of the prison by a maidservant, to a messenger, who took them to Dort, in Holland, where in due time they were printed.

Imprisonment, persecution, death, did not appal

these men. They petitioned, they implored the Privy Council and Parliament to grant an inquiry, when they would show that they were neither seditious

THE MARSHALSEA IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

nor disloyal, but only sought to worship in accordance with their solemn convictions of the teachings of the New Testament. "We are ready to prove our Church order to be warranted by the Word of God, allowable by her Majesty's laws, and no ways prejudicial to her sovereign power. . . . . Oh! let us not perish before trial and judgment, especially imploring and crying out to you for the same."

All was of no use. Continued imprisonment, till they died in gaol, barbarous execution, banishment, all failed to stamp out the strong convictions of these men and their claim for liberty of conscience. Raleigh, with bitter irony, in reply to those who were for rooting them out, said, "Root them out, by all means"; but, he inquired, who was to maintain the thousands of women and children who would be left destitute at their death? Elizabeth herself was greatly concerned at the execution of Barrowe and Greenwood. She demanded of the learned Dr. Reynolds to tell her what manner of men they were; whereupon he answered that he was persuaded, if they had lived, they would have been two as worthy instruments for the Church of God as had been raised up in that age. The Queen sighed, and said no more; but afterwards, riding to a park by the place where they were executed, and being willing to take further information respecting them, demanded of the Earl of Cumberland, who was present when they suffered, what end they made. He answered, "A very godly end, and prayed for your Majesty and State." It was also declared that the Queen demanding of the archbishop what, in his conscience, he thought of them, he answered that he thought they were servants of God, but dangerous to the State. "Alas!" said she, "shall we put the servants of God to death?"

So far from their being suppressed and worn out, men who sought to convince them by argument were converted to their views, joined their body, and became prisoners rather than abandon their tenets.

The church formed in Bridewell Prison was the precursor of other churches or congregations; and though the records of the faithful were mostly prison records, and the flocks were undistinguished in the uproar of political changes and the struggle for place and power—in which Sir Francis Bacon proved that great intellect may not be inconsistent with a shrivelled moral sense—the indomitable spirit which was afterwards displayed by the emigrants to New England was awaiting an opportunity for future manifestation.*

We have already spoken of the first English tragedy. Another play in English, a little later than *Gorboduc*, was *Cambyses*, by Thomas Preston, of King's College, Cambridge, whose acting, as well as his writing, pleased Elizabeth, when her Majesty witnessed the tragedy of *Dido* performed at Cambridge University. It is to Preston's play that Shakespeare is supposed to have alluded when he made Falstaff, in the First Part of *Henry IV.*, say, before pretending to chide the wild Prince Hal, in character of his father, "Give me a cup of sack to make mine eyes look red, that it may be thought I have wept; for I must speak in passion, and I will do it in King Cambyses' vein." The play of *Henry IV.*, Part II., was printed in 1600.

Spenser, who lived to see the success of his friend Shakespeare, and of his own supreme work, the

* In a lecture entitled "An Hour with the Pilgrim Fathers and their Precursors," delivered, in 1869, to the Working Men's Educational Union, by the late Mr. Benjamin Scott, Chamberlain of the City of London, there is much interesting information on the subject, and to that lecture this reference is mainly due.

"Faërie Queene," had died at his house at Westminster in 1599. The fate of the fiery and impetuous Essex had, it was whispered, been a death-blow to the Queen, who was already smitten with age and the cares and sorrows of state, and was nearing the end of her life and reign.

Upon the fearless Raleigh, the friend of the poet, the shadow of the prison was about to fall, though he knew it not. Another year and the great Queen would be numbered with the dead; James the Sixth of Scotland would be trying his best to induce the English Council to send the crown jewels to him in Scotland; would be asking for money to defray the expenses of his slow journey to London; and would be chuckling, in his thick-tongued manner, that in England he would be no longer under the control of the Presbyterian ministers and the factions of the Scottish Court, but would make the judges and make the bishops—and so make both law and gospel.

It is not surprising that, under such a rule as that of James I., when the Court of High Commission of the Star Chamber dealt with cases as it pleased, and judges and juries were often suborned by the King, with the aid of Ministers whose whole endeavours were to supersede each other in the King's favour, the Fleet Prison maintained its evil reputation. In 1613 Sir Robert Killigrew was committed to that "noisome place" by the Council for having spoken a few words with Sir Thomas Overbury, who called to him while he was passing the prison window in the Tower, after visiting Sir Walter Raleigh, who had already been

long shut up there. The widow of the Earl of Dorset, the Lord Treasurer, who died in 1608, was sent to the Fleet for a week or so, for daring to push her way into the Council Chamber, "and importuning the King contrary to commandment." This was the indignity

BRIDEWELL.

which the widow of the famous Thomas Sackville, the poet, received from the boastful pedant who kept some of the royal printers busy with his arrogant and impious treatises on royal authority, and the divine right and irresponsible power of Kings. The prisons and the executioners were busy in punishing persons innocent of crime, long after the guilty conspirators of the Gunpowder Plot went on their last dark journey, along Fleet Street to the scaffold at the west end of St. Paul's Churchyard.

The art of printing in England had fallen, and fear of the verdict of the iniquitous and unconstitutional Star Chamber made the stationers of Fleet Street reluctant to incur fine, imprisonment, and ruin; but books, "pamphlets," and "libels," were secretly published, for all that. The pamphlet—the derivation of which was said to be from the French *par un filet*—a few printed leaves stitched together with thread, but unbound—was just beginning to push into influence. The "libel" was, as its name implies, only a little book, not necessarily of a scandalous or defamatory character. The written appeal or application of a suitor in an ecclesiastical court was called a libel, and the publication of a "libel" did not involve an offence against the law, until little books containing matter contrary to the views of the ruling powers were denounced and condemned. James was anxious to maintain peace, and in that he was right; but a king who did so through parsimony and cowardice, and who so truckled to Spain that he sacrificed Raleigh to the furious demands of Gondomar, who sought the death of the distinguished enemy of his master, could gain little credit from the nation. Not only men eminent for learning and statesmanship, but the common people sighed and were angry when they thought of the days of the fearless Queen, who had a genuine affection for her people, hardly as she had treated those who would not conform to the Established Church. Her Court was decorous, and distinguished for stately courtesy and intellectual culture. She

could be generous on occasions, but was not extravagant in her expenditure, either on herself or her servants; and though she granted monopolies to favourites, they were not so numerous nor so ill-bestowed as those of her successor. Well might

THE STAR CHAMBER.

Lord Howard be represented to have said to Harrington: "Your Queen did talk of her subjects' love and affection, and in good truth she aimed well; our King talketh of his subjects' fear and subjection, and herein I think he doeth well, too, *as long as it holdeth good.*"

James prepared the way for the revolution which swept his son Charles from the throne. He wanted people even to be merry on compulsion, and ordered the "Book of Sports" to be made a manual of Sunday observance, under penalties as grievous as

though it had been an ordinance of religion. As a conceited, unscrupulous blunderer, he has had few equals in misgovernment, and he inherited some complicated difficulties with regard to the Nonconformists which led to the emigration of the Pilgrim Fathers, and to the unpolitical, but uncompromising, Puritanism which, by its patient determination, did so much to maintain the resistance before which the Stuarts at last disappeared from the throne.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE "MERMAID," THE "DEVIL," AND THE "MITRE."

Shakespeare's Dramas Acted and Printed—The Winter Theatre in Blackfriars—Ben Jonson—Tobacco at the Theatres—Randolph—The "Bricklayer"—Jonson's Duel—The Children of the Chapel—Salathiel Pavy—Fleet Street Shows—Jonson's Plays, Masques, and Revels—High Jinks at Court—Herrick—The "Apollo"—Leges Conviviales—Dick's—Lilly the Astrologer—The Royal Society—The Society of Antiquaries—Sir Hugh Myddelton and the New River—Cowley.

SHAKESPEARE was in the zenith of his fame at the accession of James I. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* had been printed in 1602, and *Othello* was acted in that year. *Hamlet* was printed in 1603, the year of Elizabeth's death, and in the following year *Measure for Measure* was acted at Whitehall, where Kingham appeared in 1607, in which year *The Taming of the Shrew* was entered at Stationers' Hall, though it is believed that it had been acted by Henslowe's company in 1593.

Troilus and Cressida, having been acted at Court, was printed in 1609, and *Pericles*, one of the doubtful plays of Shakespeare, also appeared. In that year, Smethwick, the "Stationer" in St. Dunstan's Churchyard, printed his edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, and in 1611 his editions of *Hamlet*. *The Tempest* and *A Winter's Tale* were both acted at Whitehall that year.

The plays of *Macbeth*, *Cymbeline*, *Timon of*

Athens, *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Coriolanus* are not to be exactly dated, but they belong to the later period of Shakespeare's work, after he had again taken up his residence at Stratford. He then came only occasionally to London, but was well known and recognised in the Highway of Letters, near which he had his town dwelling, having, in 1612-13, purchased a house and appurtenances near the Blackfriars Theatre, the indenture for the conveyance of which describes him as William Shakespeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon.

In 1613 Shakespeare seems to have terminated his connection with the theatres, so far as any personal attendance was concerned, and in that year the "Globe" was burnt down during the performance of his new play, *King Henry VIII.* We have already seen that there was a great difference between the comparatively rude accessories of the Globe and the refinements of the Blackfriars, or Winter, Theatre, where plays were performed by candle-light, and where, subsequently, there was drapery or a "drop-scene," to screen the stage from the audience during the preparation of something like appropriate, though still very simple, scenery and furniture.

It was in the course of an attempt by "The King's Players" to produce the drama of *Henry VIII.* with some effect, even to the extent of laying down matting on the stage, that the old theatre was destroyed; but it may be hoped there was no serious injury to life or limb, for Sir Henry Wotton thus describes the catastrophe:—

"King Henry, making a mask at the Cardinal Wolsey's house, and certain cannons being shot off at his entry, some of the paper or stuff wherewith one of them was stopped did light on the thatch, where, being thought at first but an idle smoke, and their eyes more attentive to the show, it kindled inwardly and ran round like a train, consuming, within less than an hour, the whole house to the very grounds. This was the fatal period to that virtuous fabric, wherein yet nothing did perish but wood and straw, and a few forsaken cloaks; only one man had his breeches set on fire, that perhaps had broiled him, if he had not, by the benefit of a provident wit, put it out with bottled ale."

William Shakespeare's young brother, Edmund, had come to London from Stratford-upon-Avon, and was known to Alleyne, Henslowe, and the actors; in 1607 he died, at the age of twenty-seven, and was buried in the church of St. Mary Overy.

William Shakespeare himself was in London in November, 1614, and probably he was then engaged in settling some law business in relation to his property. In March, 1616, less than a month before his death, he executed the will which has long been a famous relic, and in which his house in Ireland Yard, near the Blackfriars Theatre, is mentioned; the site of the theatre being, as we have said, known as Playhouse Yard.

That the Blackfriars was a fashionable theatre is on record in repeated instances. There was an open

space in front "to turne coaches in," and Ben Jonson, who not only played there, but in 1607 dates his dedication of *Volpone, or the Fox*, "from my house in the Blackfriars," speaks of the theatre in another

ST. MARY OVERY. (*From an Etching by Hollar, 1647.*)

play, *The Devil is an Ass*, where one of the characters says:—

> "Here is a cloak cost fifty pound, wife,
> Which I can sell for thirty, when I have seen
> All London in't, and London has seen me.
> To-day I go to the Blackfriars Playhouse,
> Sit in the view, salute all my acquaintance;
> Rise up between the acts; let fall my cloak;
> Publish a handsome man and a rich suit."

There was no "dress circle" at that time, the noble patrons of the drama, the lords and gentlemen, sitting on stools upon the stage, and talking, smoking, or

eating oranges between the acts. The rage for tobacco in the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth extended even to the ladies, who not unfrequently indulged in the weed—though not often in public. Whether one of James I.'s antipathies to Raleigh was that he had been credited with first introducing the vile Stygian practice, it would be difficult to say, but that the King was a sworn foe to the practice of smoking—and published and printed a "Counterblast"—everybody knows, as well as he knows that even the monarch who vowed he would have everybody think alike in religion, could not put out the pipes of his subjects.

The provision of seats upon the stage and of pipes and ale, oranges and nuts, for the gallants who showed themselves there to the masked or unmasked ladies in the *parterre*, as the French used to call the reserved part of the "auditorium," lasted even to the end of the reign of Anne, if not later.

The Blackfriars Theatre remained in the hands of the sons of Burbage, who, in 1633, leased it to the players for £50 a year, but in 1655 the building was pulled down and ordinary tenements took its place. As late as 1638 references to the opposition to the theatre by the Puritan dwellers in the locality were made by the satirists, especially as the said objectors carried on trades which were themselves open to objection on the ground of ministering to frivolity. Thus, in Randolph's *Muses' Looking Glass*, published 1586—Mrs. Flowerdew says:—

> "Indeed, it sometimes pricks my conscience
> I come to sell 'em pins and looking glasses."

To which Mr. Bird replies:—

> "'Tis fit that we, which are sincere professors,
> Should gain by infidels."

The whole precinct, however, which may be called the entrance to the Highway of Letters, was distinguished for famous inhabitants, down to the time when, in 1735, its privileges of being outside the civic jurisdiction ceased, and it became a part of the Ward of Farringdon Within. Three famous artists lived there—Isaac Oliver, the miniature painter, who died in 1617, and was buried in St. Anne's, Blackfriars; Sir Anthony Van Dyck, the famous friend and admired royal painter to Charles I.; and Cornelius Jansen, who dwelt there for many years. Fancy the erect and elegant figure of Van Dyck, with lace and ruffles, going down Fleet Street to Whitehall. He stuck to his house in Blackfriars for the whole time that he was in England, from 1632 to his death, in 1641, and the rental was estimated at about £20 a year. His daughter, Justinia, was born there, and was baptised in St. Anne's church on the day of her father's death.

More gloomy is the association of the Earl and Countess of Somerset with Blackfriars. There they lived when the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury stung the nation into resentment against James and his abominable favourites.

As to Ben Jonson, he laid the scene of one of his best known plays—*The Alchemist*—as it were at his own door; but we must say a word or two more about him, for during the reign of the first Stuart in

England he was a brilliant representative of the Highway of Letters, and was one of the most picturesque exponents of its varied life and character.

In the year 1575 there was living in Hartshorne Lane, the steep and narrow turning near the end of the Strand, now called Northumberland Street, a respectable woman, the wife of a master bricklayer. She had married him when she was a widow, with one child—a boy born after his father's death and christened with the name of Benjamin—thereafter to be known to the world as "Ben"—Ben Jonson. His grandfather, who was a man of good family and some property, had moved from Annandale, in Scotland, to Carlisle, and was afterwards in the service of Henry VIII. His father was one of those who, in the reign of Mary, were persecuted and deprived of their estates; and afterwards he entered into holy orders as a Protestant clergyman, and became "a grave preacher of the Gospel." The child, Ben Jonson, was born in Westminster. His mother, on her second marriage, removed to her husband's house in Hartshorne Lane, and the boy was sent by his stepfather to the school attached to the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and gave so much evidence of ability that a former friend of his father helped to send him to Westminster School, where the learned Camden was second master, and took great pains with a scholar whom he found so apt and assiduous.

Young Ben soon reached the upper form in the famous school, and in later years warmly acknowledged his deep obligations to his master—

> "Camden, most reverend head, to whom I owe
> All that I am in arts, and all I know."

And in the dedication of *Every Man in his Humour*, years afterwards, he assures his "most learned and honoured friend" that he is "not one of those who can suffer the benefit conferred upon his youth to perish with his age."

It is believed that he obtained a scholarship or exhibition for the University of Cambridge, and that the friend who had previously sent him to Westminster helped him. Fuller says he was "statutably entered at St. John's College." That the lad had distinguished himself in learning cannot be doubted. We afterwards find him saying, according to Drummond of Hawthornden, whom he visited as a friend, but who does not appear to have spoken of him in a very friendly spirit, "He was Master of Arts in both the Universities—by their favour, not his studies," which seems to suggest that though, because of the want of means of support, he left College without taking any degree, he afterwards had degrees conferred upon him by both Universities. This also seems to be indicated by his dedication of *Volpone* to "the most noble and most equal sisters—the two Universities."

When, having left Cambridge, he appeared one night at the door of the house in Hartshorne Lane, footsore, weary, shabbily clothed, and with a look of want and suffering, he had grown to be a tall, strongly-built and rather clumsy youth, with a rugged but capable-looking face, and a determined

manner. His mother's strong desire that he should become a famous scholar, perhaps a parson, could not then be fulfilled. His own ambition, with his strong aversion to the business of bricklaying, was set aside, for he had come home—walking all the way from Cambridge—to earn a living by working at the only occupation then open to him.

Building was going on at Lincoln's Inn, and his stepfather was employed in setting up the new wall that was to surround the garden. There Ben was put to work for which he had little ability and still less taste, and there he was seen in the dinner-hour, or at stolen moments, reading a Greek or Latin book, which he carried in his pocket. He was about eighteen years old when, finding that he could no longer endure the occupation by which he had to earn his bread, he went, as a volunteer recruit, to join the English force which had been sent to the Low Countries to oppose the Spanish invasion.

He seems to have done soldierly service, and some references to his military experience indicate that he engaged in single combat with an antagonist, whom he slew; but the expedition was not one in which to gain much honour or much pay, and intelligence of the death of his stepfather hastened young Ben Jonson's return, lest his widowed mother should be left destitute and unprotected. Whether he attempted to continue the bricklaying business is not clear. It is not likely that he would have scorned it, for he probably held the opinion, afterwards expressed by Fuller, in speaking of the rivals who

derided "the bricklayer," "let not those blush who have, but those who have not, a lawful calling."

That he quickly turned his attention to the stage is clear enough, for there are numerous records of his "writing up" certain dramas, or providing plays and characters for Henslowe; and in 1596 he commenced a career in which, a year afterwards, he appeared as actor as well as dramatist at the Rose, at Bankside, in which he held a share. In this year *Every Man in His Humour* was produced, with Italian scenes and characters, but he re-wrote it, making it entirely English, and laying the scene in London, in the neighbourhood including Coleman Street and Hoxton, with which he was well acquainted, from his association with the Curtain Theatre when he played "Jeronimo" in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, and wrote for Henslowe a new scene.

He was still exceedingly poor, and like some other poor authors and dramatists, including Shakespeare, had married without much prospect of maintaining his wife, not to speak of his mother; but in its new form *Every Man in His Humour* was played by the company of which Shakespeare, then achieving his great success, was a member, and Shakespeare himself was one of the performers in it.

It was not till later in life that Jonson, who was ten years younger than Shakespeare, attained to the social celebrity or the burly Falstaffian proportions with which we mostly associate him. At the time of his earlier successes he was a tall, gaunt, large-boned young man, with eyes full of eager intelligence, and a

face strongly marked and scarred, either from the effects of small-pox or some scorbutic affection. When he later spoke of his "mountain belly" and his "rocky face," he had not much improved in appearance, but his countenance had always in it the light of genius and the glow of good-fellowship.

It was in 1598 that he fell into trouble, in consequence of a quarrel with an actor—one of Henslowe's company, named Gabriel Spencer—who challenged him to a duel, which was fought in Hoxton Fields; Spencer's sword was ten inches longer than that of Jonson, who was severely wounded in the arm, but slew his adversary, and was committed to prison, and, as he says, "brought near the gallows." A letter of Henslowe, apparently written in a bitter temper, probably at the loss of one of his company who was, perhaps, a personal friend, says to his correspondent, "Since you weare with me, I have lost one of my company, which hurteth me greatly, that is Gabriell, for he is slayen in Hogesdon fields by the hands of bergemen Jonson, bricklayer." There seems to be a touch of spite in the "bergemen," which is like a conversion of Benjamin to "Bargeman," and in the "bricklayer," which was so often used as a term of reproach to the poet. It may be possible that the quarrel with Gabriel Spencer arose from some such expressions being used; but nothing more is known of the particulars, except from the burial register of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, where we learn that in "1598. Gabriell Spencer being slayne, was buryed ye xxiij^th^ of September," and that he was of "Hogge Lane," a

thoroughfare then leading from Norton Folgate to Bunhill Fields.

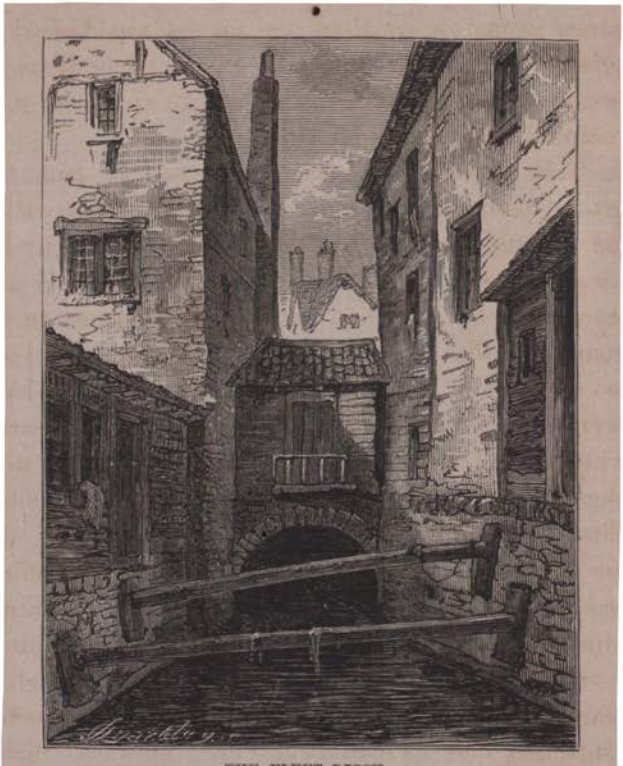
Thus Jonson's first great success was followed by a calamity which might have put an end to his career in more ways than one, for he was visited in prison by a Popish priest, by whose persuasions he became a Roman Catholic, a change which he only recanted twelve years afterwards.

This visitation by the priest was, in fact, the greater peril, for it would seem that the prosecution for the result of the duel was abandoned; but his communications with the priest were watched and listened to by spies, and had he not been put on his guard by the gaoler he would probably have been led on to some incautious remark which might have been made a serious matter. The numerous emissaries who, it was believed, and in many cases proved, were engaged in plots to assassinate or poison Queen Elizabeth, caused constant alarm and suspicion, and for a prisoner like Jonson to be visited by a priest was regarded as a reason for endeavouring to entrap him into admissions that might be used against him.

Ben Jonson soon rose to a fame which, though it scarcely approached that of Shakespeare, and has not continued and increased in later times as Shakespeare's has, outlived, in general popularity, that of Marlowe, Chapman, and of his contemporaries Dekker, John Marston, and his later friends, Webster, Massinger, Ford, and Shirley, if not of Beaumont and Fletcher.

The earnestness, the descriptive power, and the satire

of Ben Jonson were more appreciated in the later days of Elizabeth than they were a few years after the accession of James, when the tone of the Court was



THE FLEET DITCH.

lowered, and the general corruption extended, not only to political but to social life. The influence which the depression of manners and morals had upon the drama soon became apparent. Appreciation of the higher comedy declined, and the theatre no

longer represented national taste, since the opposition of the greatly increasing number of Puritans to the low and degrading taste of the Court extended to theatrical representations, which showed something of the same depraved inclination.

At the accession of James, Shakespeare was the greatest living writer. His dramatic company became "the King's Players." The Children of the Chapel, who became "the Children of His Majesty's Revels," acted Ben Jonson's *Poetaster* and his *Cynthia's Revels* at the Blackfriars Theatre. The latter was printed in 1601, having been first acted in 1600, three years before the death of Elizabeth. The names of the children (boys) who performed it were Nat Field (who afterwards became dramatist as well as actor), Salathiel Pavy, Thomas Day, I. Underwood, Rob Baxter, and John Frost. On one of these (Salathiel Pavy, who died young), Jonson wrote the tender epitaph often quoted, of which the following four verses may be remembered:—

"Weep with me, all you that read
This little story;
And know, for whom a tear you shed,
Death's self is sorry.

"'Twas a child that so did thrive
In grace and feature,
As Heaven and Nature seemed to strive
Which owned the creature.

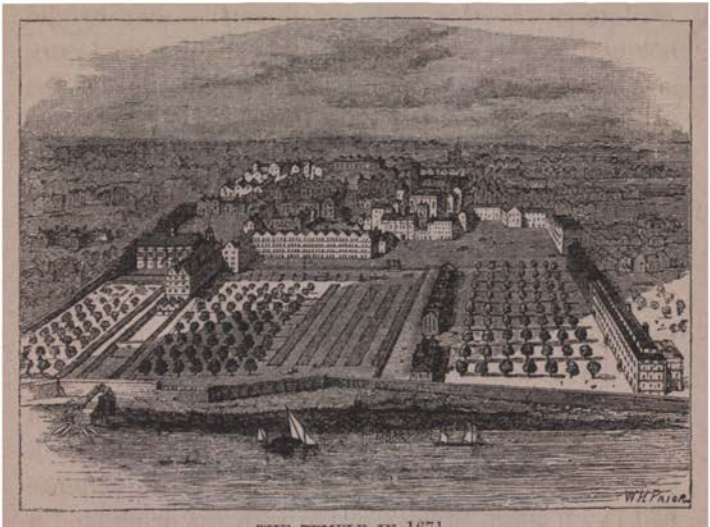
"Years he numbered scarce thirteen,
When fates turned cruel;
Yet three filled zodiacs had he been
The stage's jewel.

"And did act (what now we moan)
Old men so duly,
As soon the Parcæ thought him one,
He played so truly."

Jonson would never stoop to write down to the taste of a debased audience—would never cease to satirise vice and hypocrisy, or to show his high regard for honour and virtue. He was impartial in his brilliant pictures of the time, whether he pourtrayed the braggart, the dissolute and the effeminate, or the hypocritical and sanctimonious, in the broad humour of his *Bartholomew Fair* or in the more subtle strain of some of his other dramas.

His two tragedies, *Sejanus* and *Catiline*, were printed respectively in 1605 and 1611. In 1613 he went to France as tutor and companion to the son of Sir Walter Raleigh, and on his return wrote *Bartholomew Fair*, and in 1616 his comedy *The Devil is an Ass*. This was the year of Shakespeare's death, and in the same year Jonson published a folio volume intended to be the first volume of his collected works, including plays, poems, and epigrams. He wrote no more for the public stage during the reign of James I., but devoted himself to those elaborate and elegant Court masques, in which he found delightful opportunity, not only for the display of his classical scholarship, but for his lively wit and exuberant fancy. He was no novice in this sort of composition, for, in 1603, he and Dekker had composed a masque, or spectacle, for the City magnates, to celebrate the accession of the King, and to be performed in the hall of the

Merchant Taylors' Company. Sir John Swynnerton was "entreated to confer with Master Benjamin Jonson, the poet, about a speech to be made to welcome his Majesty, and about music, and other inventions, which may give liking and delight; by reason that the



THE TEMPLE IN 1671.

Company doubt that their schoolmasters and scholars be not acquainted with such kind of entertainments."

The Queen (Anne of Denmark) had already witnessed the first masque written by Ben Jonson, while she was staying at Althorpe, with her eldest son, before following the King to London. The name of it was *The Satyr*, and Jonson had prepared it for the occasion, by request of Sir Robert Spencer. Doubtless this had some effect on Jonson's fortunes, for her Majesty doted on these shows, especially

when she took a part in them, which gave her an opportunity of dancing. James himself, pedantic, and yet coarse in his tastes, had enough learning to appreciate the poet's classic allusions, and enough wit to laugh at his satirical conceits.

Jonson was so fearless and impartial that he did not hesitate to loose his shafts of satire at the Court, and Queen Elizabeth had doubtless enjoyed the brightness of the humour that lighted the foibles of her friends. So did James, in his clownish way; but when he detected in *Eastward Ho!*—written by Chapman, Martin, and Jonson—what he thought was a "skit" upon Scottish courtiers, he clapped all three poets into prison, and there was some fear that they might have their ears cut off, or their noses slit. They were only detained for a short time, and, on their release, Jonson gave an entertainment to his friends, at which his mother "drank to him, and showed him a paper, the contents of which she designed, if the sentence had taken effect, to have mixed with his drink, and it was strong and hasty poison. To show that she was no churl, she designed to have first drank of it herself."

This was in 1605, and it is a strange and grim illustration of the dangers that beset men in the Highway of Letters under the new despotism; but either the poet and his friends had some influence at Court, or James himself thought it would not be to his advantage to punish so well-known and popular a poet as the accomplished designer of Court entertainments, in which the highest personages were likely to be the performers.

The contemporary biographical references to Jonson's early life are often misleading, and sometimes disparaging, for he was regarded with no little animosity by many of those who saw in him a formidable rival, and were ready to bespatter him with epithets and to malign his character. Independent, outspoken, and doubtless having a "hate of hate and scorn of scorn" for those who assailed him, but evidently of a warm, generous, and forgiving nature, "the bricklayer," as his opponents were fond of calling him, needs no better evidence of ability than is afforded by the letters addressed to him by his admiring friend, the learned Selden, and the affectionate expressions in the verses of those companions who admired and loved him, companions who, like Beaumont and Fletcher, were themselves successfully engaged in the same pursuits, and were his constant associates.

Fuller, the accomplished historian and divine, another admirer of Ben Jonson, came later to the Highway of Letters, for it was not till after the cause of Charles the First was ruined that he, who had been a supporter of the royal authority, was chosen lecturer of St. Bride's, Fleet Street; but Fuller's accuracy may mostly be taken for granted, and his "Worthies of England" is one of the quaintest and most interesting books of reference now in use. His memory for the records of personal history make it valuable; and that memory was itself so remarkable for accuracy that it was declared he could tell, in their exact order, the signs that were over the tradesmen's

doors after once walking between Temple Bar and the Royal Exchange.

One can scarcely part from the contemporaries of Jonson in Fleet Street without referring again to Massinger, whose *New Way to Pay Old Debts* and *The City Madam* are probably better known to-day than most of Jonson's own plays. Nor must we omit to mention John Webster, tailor and parish clerk of St. Andrew's, Holborn, who was a poet of no mean achievement, as his *Duchess of Malfi*, with its mastery of tragic intensity, will prove.

The masques and Court entertainments in the early part of the reign were so frequent, and often so magnificent, that Jonson was in pretty constant and remunerative employment, often receiving considerable presents from the King and from noblemen, at whose country houses he was a frequent visitor, for the purpose of designing such representations. The masque, indeed, was at its zenith in the time of James, and declined at the end of his reign, never to be revived in its former splendour.

Bacon, the learned Solicitor-General and Clerk of the Star Chamber, designed, in February, 1613, a masque of the *Marriage of the Thames and the Rhine*, for the gentlemen of Gray's Inn, to celebrate the wedding of the Princess Elizabeth and the Elector Palatine; and in his essay on "Masques and Triumphs" we have his opinion, that "it is better they should be graced with elegancy than daubed with cost. Dancing to song is a thing of great state and pleasure," and he advocates "choirs, placed one

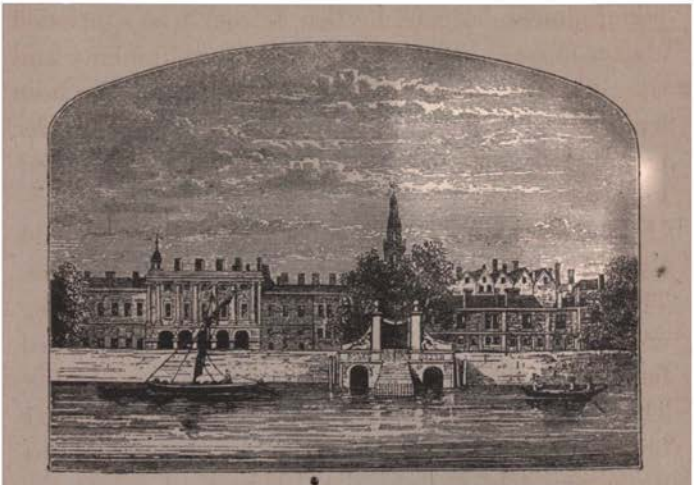
over against another, scenes abounding with light, colours of white, carnation, and a kind of sea-water green, graceful suits, not after examples of known attires, sweet odours suddenly coming forth."

He had doubtless seen the stately and sumptuous performances designed by Ben Jonson, who continued always to be an admirer of the great attainments and the consummate ability of the man who, had he been less ambitious and grasping, would have left a nobler name, more consistent with his profound and varied knowledge.

It was not always that James and his Queen could rise to the refinement of Jonson's graceful inventions. There was a frequent tendency to excess in eating and drinking, to vulgar romping and ill-concealed familiarity in some of the Court entertainments. This was manifested when the visit of the Queen's brother, the King of Denmark, was the occasion for a round of festivities which cost the nation a considerable sum of money, without increasing respect for the King. The royal visitor, who took up his abode at the Queen's House (Somerset House—which had been re-named Denmark House by order of James), was, so to speak, the immediate neighbour of the leading men in the Highway of Letters, for Fleet Street was then the very centre to which the followers and admirers of literature and the drama were attracted; but the entertainments which seem to have been prepared for his reception were far below the level of the elegant taste of the dwellers in the Temple and other Inns of Court.

The masque, described by Sir John Harrington in a letter to the secretary, Barlow, on that occasion, was not such as would have commended itself either to Bacon or Jonson. Sir John wrote :—

"One day a great feast was held, and after dinner



SOMERSET HOUSE AND STAIRS, AS THEY APPEARED BEFORE BEING PULLED DOWN IN 1776.

the representation of Solomon, his temple, and the coming of the Queen of Sheba was made, or (as I may better say) was meant to have been made before their Majesties, by device of the Earl of Salisbury and others. But, alas! as all earthly things do fail to poor mortals in enjoyment, so did prove our presentment thereof. The lady who did play the Queen's part did carry most precious gifts to both their Majesties; but forgetting the steppes arising to the canopy, overset her caskets into his Danish

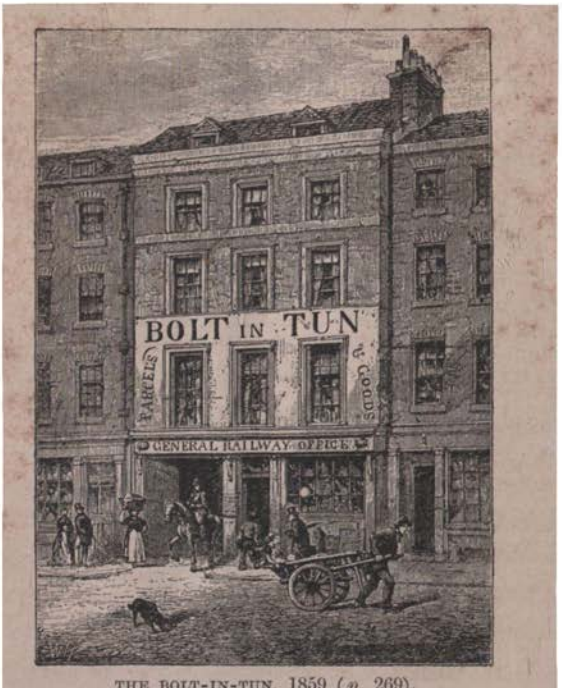
Majestie's lap, and fell at his feet, though I think it was rather on his face. Much was the hurry and confusion; cloths and napkins were at hand to make all clean. His Majestie then got up, and would dance with the Queen of Sheba; but he fell down and humbled himself before her, and was carried to an inner chamber, and laid on a bed of state, which was not a little defiled with the presents of the Queen, which had been bestowed on his garments, such as wine, cream, jelly, beverage, cakes, spices, and other good matters. The entertainment and show went forward, and most of the presenters went backward or fell down—wine did so occupy their upper chambers. Now did appear, in rich dress, Hope, Faith, and Charity. Hope did essay to speak, but wine rendered her endeavours so feeble that she withdrew, and hoped the King would excuse her brevity. Faith was then alone, for I am certain she was not joyned to good works, and left the Court in a staggering condition. Charity came to the King's feet, and seemed to cover the multitude of sins her sister had committed; in some sort she made obeyance, and brought giftes, but said she would return home again, as there was no gift which Heaven had not already given his Majestie. She then returned to Hope and Faith, who were both sick . . . in the lower hall. Next came Victory, in bright armour, and presented a rich sword to the King—who did not accept it, but put it by with his hand—and, by a strange medley of versification, did endeavour to make suit to the King. But Victory did not triumph long, for, after

much lamentable utterance, she was led away like a silly captive, and laid to sleep on the outer steps of the ante-chamber. Now did Peace make entry, and strive to get foremoste to the King; but I grieve to tell how great wrath she did discover unto those of her attendants; and much contrary to her semblance, made rudely war with her olive-branch, and laid on the pates of those who did oppose her coming."

The graphic and vivid pictures of the fashions and manners of the time to be found in the plays and verses of Ben Jonson are incomparable, for the poet had not only keen observation, but he dwelt, so to speak, in the central resort of people of every grade, and his area of observation chiefly included the City, between Temple Bar and Finsbury fields, with Fleet Street and St. Paul's as the representative trysting places. The Cathedral was more than ever the lounge and promenade of the idle and, it may also be said, of the dissolute, and the follies and eccentricities of fashion were daily to be witnessed there.

During the law terms Fleet Street and its vicinity was often crowded with country gentlemen; and the knight or squire seldom came singly, for his whole family were equally eager to gaze upon the marvels and enjoy the pleasures of the metropolis. This desire frequently added so greatly to the throng in the streets, and set such an example to country people of the poorer sort to resort to London, where they might find employment, that James and his successors endeavoured to pass laws against the

increase of houses, and the royal displeasure was pronounced against the country gentry who came to enjoy the stir and diversions of the metropolis, leaving their tenants and dependents to look after their estates in the shires.



THE BOLT-IN-TUN, 1859 (*p.* 269).

It need hardly be said that in Fleet Street, where the visitor found some attractive show, amusing entertainment, or alluring tavern, at every few yards of his progress, there were cheats and knaves lying in wait to rob or swindle him; and the methods of "Coney catching" were pretty freely explained by

Robert Greene in a book with that title published in three parts, and also in his "Notable Discovery of Coosnage," and "The Gull's Horn Book."

As to the shows in Fleet Street, Jonson's allusions to them are so significant that most of them have been quoted in connection with his plays, especially that in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, where Sogliardo says: "They say there's a new motion* of the City of Nineveh, with Jonas and the whale, to be seen at Fleet Bridge; you can tell, cousin?" To which Fungoso replies: "Yes, I think there be such a thing; I saw the picture."

As frequently have been quoted his lines depicting the condition of the Fleet, already called Fleet Dyke, or ditch—lines recording the extraordinary freak of Sir Ralph Shelton and a Mr. Heyden, who, in a row-boat, made the voyage from Bridewell to Holborn:—

> "All was to them the same; they were to pass,
> And so they did, from Styx to Acheron,
> The ever-boiling flood, whose banks upon
> Your Fleet Lane furies and hot cooks do dwell,
> That with still-scalding streams make the place hell;
> The sinks run grease, and hair of measled hogs,
> The heads, houghs, entrails, and the hides of dogs,
> For, to say truth, what scullion is so nasty
> To put the skins and offals in a pasty?"

The catalogue of revolting pollutions was very little diminished for a century afterwards, and Fleet Ditch was a theme for successive satirical poets, down

* Mechanically acting figures; a "puppet show."

to the time of Swift, and of Pope, who, in fierce denunciations in his "Dunciad," consigns "profound, dark and dirty authors" to the foul ditch which—

> "With disemboguing streams,
> Rolls its large tribute of *dead dogs* to Thames."

Jonson, with whom we have not quite done, lived—so Aubrey says (and gives, what with him was rare, authority for so saying) "without Temple Bar, at a comb maker's shop, about the Elephant and Castle"; and either there, or at a later dwelling, he had a good library, in which were books so rare and valuable that Selden could find among them volumes which he had sought elsewhere in vain. Yet Jonson was often poor—in his earlier days very poor, when receiving such small sums from Henslowe and others that the payments were often represented by shillings rather than pounds.

Jonson was too generous, too hospitable, too convivial, to grow rich, even when he was receiving larger payments for the masques invented for the amusement of the Court; but his conviviality was not that of low excess, or intemperance. The many young men to whom he was literary guide, philosopher, and friend held him in sincere and affectionate regard, as shown by the verses they wrote in his honour. It is pretty evident that his "sons," as he called them, even in the frequent references to "sack" and "song," in those combats of wit and subtleties of argument which were the real objects of their meeting, spoke, as he also spoke, in an exuberance of imaginative festivity, and not in celebration of

drunken revels. Such low excess would have been destructive of the very spirit of good-fellowship, and would have been inconsistent with the distinction which was achieved by such men as Beaumont, Fletcher, and Randolph, the author of "The Muses' Looking Glass."

Jonson had been one of the chosen convives of the company of wits and poets who, with Shakespeare, Raleigh (traditionally), Selden, Beaumont, Fletcher, Cotton, Carew, and others well known in the Highway of Letters, used to meet at the Mermaid Tavern, which seems to have stood near Cheapside, with entrances both in Bread Street and Friday Street.

Among the verses devoted to Ben Jonson by his friends, including the distinguished Chapman, Donne, Francis Beaumont (who calls him "my dear friend and master"), James Shirley, Fletcher, George Lucy, Heyward (the famous lawyer), Nat Field (to his "worthy and beloved friend"), Selden (in a Latin ode), Edmund Waller, and Herrick, the parson from Devonshire, whose name still lives as that of a master of quaint, strong, and also sweet and tender verse, we are all most familiar with Beaumont's letter, "written before he and Master Fletcher came to London with two of the precedent comedies, then not finished, which deferred their merry meetings at the Mermaid." It is a poetical epistle, and is so seldom quoted at length, that readers are not much acquainted with any but the lines usually referred to in relation to the Mermaid—

"Methinks the little wit I had is lost
Since I saw you; for wit is like a rest
Held up at tennis, which men do the best
With the best gamesters. What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid! Heard words that have been
So nimble and so full of subtle flame,
As if that very one from whence they came
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
And had resolved to live a fool the rest
Of his dull life. Then where there hath been thrown
Wit able enough to justify the town
For three days past—wit that might warrant be
For the whole City to talk foolishly
Till that were cancelled; and when that was gone
We left an air behind us which alone
Was able to make the two next companies
Right witty, though but downright fools, mere * wise.
. . . . . Fate once again
Bring me to thee, who canst make smooth and plain
The way of knowledge for me, and then I,
Who have no good but in thy company,
Protest it will my greatest comfort be
To acknowledge all I have to flow from thee."

One can understand the affectionate nature of Jonson from four lines of his reply to Beaumont—

"How I do love thee, Beaumont, and thy muse,
That unto me dost such religion use!
How I do feare my selfe, that am not worth
The least indulgent thought thy pen drops forth."

The meetings at the taverns about Fleet Street were continued long after the Mermaid assemblies; and when Robert Herrick came to London from his vicarage at Dean Prior, where he lived in bachelor seclusion in plainest fashion, and wrote some delightful

* Here again "mere" is used in the sense of "completely" or "only"—"nothing else than wise"

verse, including the well-known "Cherry Ripe," he was one of the older poet's companions.

Herrick was a Londoner, born in 1591, and son of a silversmith, in Cheapside. His portrait looks like that of a Roman Emperor, with its great prominent nose and powerful chin; but he had a tender soul, for all his rugged appearance, and, amidst much in some of his verses that reflects the coarseness, but also the strength, of the age, there is a great deal which is delightful, as it were with the freshness of the bramble flower and the purple bloom that grows upon the rugged wall of a country garden.

What a robust burst of passionate praise is that in his "Hesperides"—

> "After the rare arch-poet, Jonson, died,
> The sock grew loathsome, and the buskin's pride,
> Together with the stage's glory, stood
> Each like a poor and pitied widowhood.
> The cirque prophaned was; and all postures rackt:
> For men did strut and stride, and stare—not act.
> Then, temper flew from words, and men did squeak,
> Look red, and blow, and bluster, but not speak;
> No holy rage or frantic fires did stir,
> Or flash about the spacious theatre.
> No clap of hands or shout, or praise's proof
> Did crack the playhouse sides or cleave her roof;
> . . . . . and that monstrous sin
> Of deep and arrogant ignorance came in;
> Such ignorance as theirs was who once hist
> At thy unequalled play *The Alchemist;*
> Ah! fie upon 'em! Lastly, too, all wit
> In utter darkness did and will still sit;
> Sleeping the luckless age out, till that she
> Her resurrection has again with thee."

There was something almost prophetic in this.

The declension in the taste of the frivolous audiences who visited the theatres in the reign of Charles, and who could not appreciate the strength and poignancy of writers like Jonson, went still lower. Jonson had struggled against poverty and failing health, and had produced two or three plays, but they were not to the fashionable taste.

Inigo Jones, the famous architect, who was employed to build a classic portico to St. Paul's, had been associated with him in producing the mechanical portions of the masques, but a quarrel between them left Jonson deprived, not only of the favour of the Court, but of that of the City. The architect, who was soon engaged in restoring and rebuilding, was attaining the height of fame while Jonson was declining; but it is well to know that at the end of his life the latter somewhat regained his position, and that Charles I. granted him a pension of £100 and a tierce of canary. It had been intended by James I. that he should be Poet Laureate, and he had been called by that title, but apparently without any regular annual emolument.

"O! rare Ben Jonson!" the words carved on the slab that marks his tomb in Westminster Abbey, have sometimes been called vulgar and inexpressive. "Jack Young," who it is said gave a mason eighteenpence to carve it on the stone, is remembered only by this one act of what may be called kindly and appreciative remembrance; nor does it seem to be an inappropriate memorial. It is the ejaculation of a sincere mourner, who probably could not have composed

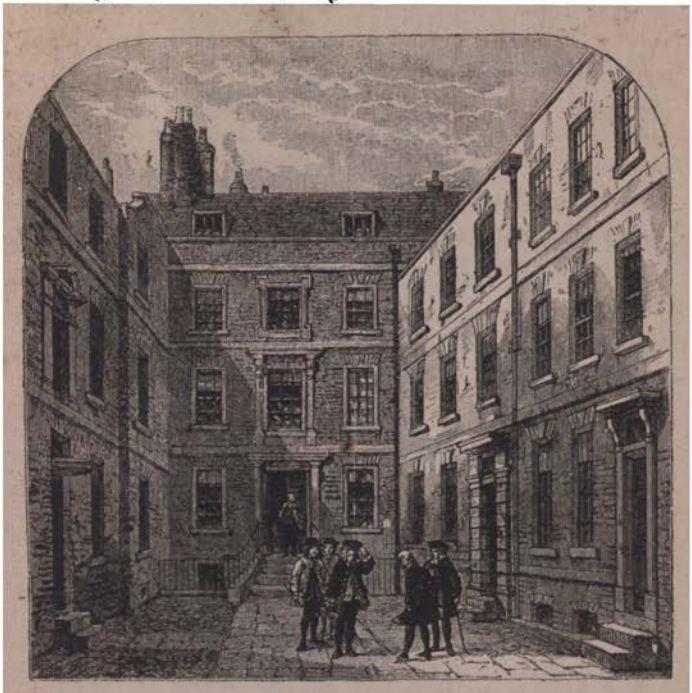
even a couplet or verse which would have been a worthy elegy on the great poet.

"O! rare Ben Jonson!" There was no revival of the drama till after the playhouses had been closed by the Puritans during the serious national troubles; and on the Restoration, amidst the reappearance of much that was vile and demoralising on the stage, there was a reaction, in which the plays of Shakespeare and Jonson held a prominent part, though gossiping, matter-of-fact Pepys recorded that the *Midsummer Night's Dream* was the "most insipid, ridiculous play" that ever he saw in his life. Yet Pepys was pretty well acquainted with Shakespeare, and read Ben Jonson's dramas, besides witnessing them with pleasure, though he failed, after repeated trials, to see any humour or much meaning in Butler's "Hudibras," when all the rest of the world was laughing at it.

The tavern with the sign of "The Devil and Saint Dunstan," and the representation of the saint clutching the fiend by the nose with his blacksmith's tongs, stood nearly opposite St. Dunstan's Church, and between Middle Temple Gate and Temple Bar. It was usually called "The Devil," and later, "The Old Devil" tavern, to distinguish it from the "Little Devil" tavern, next door to Dick's. Dick's, or as it was at first called, Richard's, Coffee House, had its name from Richard Turner, who was the tenant in 1680, and the name lasted, at all events, till as late as 1693, but it afterwards was known as Dick's, and is so called in the "Tatler."

The "Devil" Tavern has been historical ever since

Ben Jonson instituted his famous club in its large room, known as the Apollo room, and the club itself became one of the great landmarks in the history of English literature, as it was for more than a



THE ROYAL SOCIETY'S HOUSE IN CRANE COURT (*p.* 270).

century and a half a representative resort in the Highway of Letters in London.

We read of a good deal of drinking in the references to these symposia, where Jonson presided, and, as Marmion, one of his contemporaries in Fleet Street, says—

"The born Delphic god
Drinks sack, and keeps his Bacchanalia,
And has his incense and his altars smoking,
And speaks in sparkling prophecies."

But this, like Jonson's own lines, and even the verses which he placed over the door of the Apollo room, are to be interpreted by other lines, like those of his invitation of a friend to supper—

"But that which most doth take my muse and me
Is a pure cup of rich canary wine,
Which is the Mermaid's now, but shall be mine.
Of this we will sup free, but moderately;
Nor shall our cups make any guilty men:
But at our parting we will be as when
We innocently met. No single word,
That shall be utter'd at our mirthful board,
Shall make us sad next morning, or affright
The liberty that we'll enjoy to-night."

This would be an excellent motto verse for any club held to-day, except one consisting of total abstainers, and even they might profitably attend to the later lines of it.

The Apollo verses over the door of the room in the "Devil" Tavern were—

"Welcome all who lead or follow
To the oracle of Apollo:
Here he speaks out of his pottle,
Or the tripos his Tower bottle;
All his answers are divine—
Truth itself doth flow in wine.
Hang up all the poor hop-drinkers,
Cries old Sim, the King of Skinkers;
He the half of life abuses
That sits watering with the Muses.
Those dull girls no good can mean us
Wine—it is the milk of Venus

And the poet's horse accounted;
Ply it, and you all are mounted.
'Tis the true Phœbian liquor,
Cheers the brains, makes wit the quicker,
Pays all debts, cures all diseases,
And at once three senses pleases.
Welcome all who lead or follow
To the oracle of Apollo!"

The Leges Conviviales—the Club rules—were over the mantel-piece with the bust of Apollo, and were written with all Jonson's grace of Latinity, deprecating excess, and forbidding, among other things, the recital of insipid poetry.

The "Old Sim" mentioned in the Apollo verse was Simon Wadloe, the landlord of the Tavern—a famous man and a typical host, celebrated in a song entitled "Old Simon the King," which long remained a favourite, especially with country gentlemen who had visited London. It seems to have been his son, who succeeded him and afterwards became the landlord of the Sun, in Threadneedle Street, to whom Pepys refers when, in April, 1661, recording the journey of Charles II. from the Tower to Whitehall, at the Restoration, he says, "My lord Monk rode bare after the King, and led in his hand a spare horse, as being Master of the Horse. The King, in a most rich embroidered suit and cloak, looked most noble. Wadlow, the vintner at the Devil, in Fleet Street, did lead a fine company of soldiers, all young, comely men, in white doublets."

Shadwell, a later and far inferior dramatist to Jonson, frequented the "Devil," and in one of his plays

—*Bury Fair*—makes one of the characters (Oldwit) say—"I myself, simple as I stand here, was a wit in the last age. I was created Ben Jonson's son in the Apollo."

Dryden, too, in his "Defence of the Epilogue," speaks of "grave buttermen" whose memory is their only plea for being wits. They can tell a story of Ben Jonson, and perhaps have had fancy enough to give a supper in Apollo, that they might be called his sons." Dryden, in fact, satirised Shadwell and the members of a club held in the tavern in his day.

Later still Prior and Montagu spoke of the associations of the Apollo; and Pope brings it into the "Dunciad" in his satire on Colley Cibber; for Cibber was Poet Laureate, and the Odes of the Laureates were read in the Apollo Room—

> "Back to the Devil the last echoes roll,
> And 'Coll!' each butcher roars at Hockley Hole."

Hockley-in-the-Hole, Clerkenwell, was the famous locality for bear-baiting, dog-fighting, and other sports in which butchers were supposed to delight.

Down to the days of the "Spectator," and later still, the "Devil" was frequented by successive representatives of the Highway of Letters. Dr. Garth invited Addison and Swift to dinner there on the 12th of October, 1710, and one of the last records of the famous old resort is that of Sir John Hawkins, who tells us of the visit there of the great namesake of the great poet and dramatist who had made it famous

nearly two centuries before. Though there was no Apollo club there in which Dr. Samuel Johnson might have succeeded the inimitable Ben, the ancient house (it was taken down in 1788, and "Child's Place," an extension of the banking-house, erected on the site) was the scene of one of Samuel's pleasantest vagaries. This was the celebration of the first publication of a book by Mrs. Lennox, the author of "The Female Quixote" and "Shakespeare Illustrated." Johnson took much friendly interest in this lady's work, and on the appearance of her first volume invited her and her husband, a lady of her acquaintance, and several other friends, including members of the club, to supper and to make a night of it. The refreshments included a great hot apple-pie stuck with bay-leaves, the amusements some fanciful invocation of the muses and ceremonies of Johnson's own invention, with a good deal of talking, fun, and laughter; the beverages were chiefly tea, coffee, and lemonade, and the festivities lasted till eight o'clock next morning. This must have been nearly the last symposium in the old tavern where Ben Jonson and "his sons" had held their revels.

But there were other taverns where famous men did congregate, and Herrick, in an Ode to Jonson, says:—

"Ah Ben!
Say how, or when
Shall we thy guests
Meet at those lyric feasts
Made at the Sun,
The Dog, the Triple Tun?

> Where we such clusters had
> As made us nobly wild, not mad;
> And yet each verse of thine
> Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine."

These are not among resorts in the Highway of Letters, but were probably either in Holborn or towards Chepe; but in Fleet Street there was the Old Bolt-in-Tun, originally dating from 1443, when it was granted to the White Friars as "Hospitium vocatum," and the title survives, not as a tavern or as an inn and coach office, but as a booking office and carriers' yard on the south side of the Street. The Mitre also was there—not the same house which now stands in Mitre Court, and bears the original name. The present Mitre is not even the actual Mitre immortalised by Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith, Reynolds, and the dinners, port wine, and conversation so minutely recorded by Boswell. The older Mitre was a tavern mentioned by Barry in a comedy called *Ram Alley* (1611), and by Lilly the astrologer, who, in 1640, went to the Mitre with his old friend Dr. Percivall Willoughby, of Derby, and sent for Old Will Poole, the astrologer, who lived in Ram Alley, which was on the site of the later Hare Court, and formed part of the unsavoury district of Whitefriars.

Lilly, who had been a menial to one Gilbert Wright, living near Strand Bridge, married his master's widow, and came into possession of the house. He had learnt astrology from Evans, a Welshman in Holy Orders, and a Master of Arts of Oxford, who lived in Gunpowder Alley, Shoe Lane. It is recorded

by Lilly that he and another accompanied Evans to Westminster Abbey, where they were to search for a coffer of hidden treasure, the existence of which had been revealed to Evans, who had the art of invoking spirits "by the circular method." The visit was made at night, and in the darkness a violent storm of wind came on (caused, it is inferred, by the supernatural agencies invoked) at the time that the search was about to be completed. Only a light coffin was discovered, too light to be the probable receptacle of treasure, and the party of investigators fled, in fear of the tempest and what it might portend.

Lilly was a notorious bamboozler, and at one time had rather low companions, but became respectable and a freeman of the Salters' Company. He was present at the "trial" of Charles I. in Westminster Hall, and characteristically saw the silver top fall from the King's walking staff.

In the Mitre the members of the Royal Society Club held their dinners during the time that the headquarters of the Society were in Crane Court (then a very pleasant place on the north side of Fleet Street), from 1710 to 1782. In the latter year they had apartments assigned to them at Somerset House. During that period, therefore, the scientists and philosophers were conspicuous in Fleet Street; but the Society had been incorporated by Charles II., after having been an association as early as 1645. It met at various places, chiefly at Gresham College, before being settled, first at Crane Court and then at Somerset House.

Charles II. was so fond of dabbling in chemistry that he had a laboratory at Whitehall, and nearly succeeded in blowing himself up, along with some of the ladies whom he had invited to witness his unsuccessful scientific experiments. The Duke of York was a member also, and some of the early discussions of the society were amusing enough, as may be imagined. But the names of Sir Isaac Newton, Wren, Halley, Herschel, Davy, Watt, and many more men of great attainments, at once occur to us in connection with the institution; and the house in Crane Court represented the latest science of the days when Johnson wrote, and Garrick acted, and Hogarth, Gainsborough, and Reynolds painted.

Art and manufactures were also represented in Crane Court from 1754 to 1774, for there the Society of Arts—"for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce in Great Britain"—held its meetings over a circulating library. As the first circulating library had been established by Bathoe, a bookseller in the Strand, in 1740, this establishment in Crane Court was doubtless a very welcome, as it was certainly an appropriate, institution in the Highway of Letters; for though authors and lovers of learning still met to read and talk at the publishers' or booksellers' shops, the advantage of being able to obtain books from a regular lending library must have been obvious to the general reader, who took intellectual or imaginative refreshment deliberately, and needed time to digest it.

Barry, the famous painter, who was introduced to

Reynolds by Edmund Burke, and was for a time professor and lecturer at the Royal Academy, executed the pictures which now adorn the council-room of the Society in the Adelphi.

Richard Cosway, who afterwards became so successful as a miniature painter that he realised an immense income and lived in great splendour, was the first boy who took a prize of £15 under the Society's arrangement for granting premiums as rewards to a certain number of boys or girls, under the age of sixteen, who should produce the best pieces of drawing, and show themselves most capable in an examination.

The first meeting of the Society of Antiquaries was held in December, 1707, at the Bear Tavern, in the Strand, the formation of the society having been proposed by Humphrey Wanley, librarian to the Earl of Oxford, founder of the Harleian library, Mr. Bayford, and Mr. Tulman. They agreed that the business of the society should be limited to the object of antiquities, and more particularly to such things as illustrated, or related to, the history of Great Britain prior to the reign of James I. In the following year—or, allowing for the old style, in January, 1707-8—they moved to the Young (or Little) Devil Tavern in Fleet Street, already mentioned, where Peter Le Neve and others were elected members. This now important institution began modestly enough—the three original members agreeing to meet every Friday evening at six "upon pain of forfeiture of sixpence" for non-attendance.

In 1739 they met, probably to dine, at the Mitre, and by the rules then adopted the number of members was limited to one hundred, the entrance fee being a guinea, and the subscription twelve shillings a year. In 1751 George II. granted them a charter,

OLD ST. DUNSTAN'S CHURCH.

and in 1777 George III. gave them rooms in Somerset House.

The reference to the later period to which this society proposed to extend its researches reminds us that we have yet to note some features of the Highway of Letters before its aspect was changed by the Great Fire, which destroyed most of its ancient landmarks, though others were erected bearing the same names and occupying nearly the same sites.

Many considerable public improvements had been

effected in the time of James the First, and some of them by the direct interposition of the King himself, who was not deficient in that practical shrewdness which enabled him to detect and remedy abuses when their perpetration was not pecuniarily profitable to his own exchequer, or connected with his claims to undisputed authority.

His efforts to prevent the extension of building in the City, and to preserve the open spaces from encroachments, were but a continuance of the endeavours made by Elizabeth, but he went further, as we have said, in enacting that fines should be imposed on county gentlemen who brought their families to London and prolonged their visit beyond a reasonable time. The number of persons coming from the provinces and crowding the metropolis caused serious inconvenience, and, as the people of London were several times afflicted by the ravages of the plague, which was raging at the time of the King's coronation, there was considerable danger in the multiplication of narrow streets and the accumulation of close and ill-ventilated tenements.

James commanded that at least the fronts of houses should be of brick or stone. While in many parts of the country the style of architecture still known as "Jacobean" was remarkably quaint and picturesque, though somewhat heavy in decoration, in Fleet Street the improvements were chiefly in the plaster and carved-wood decorations of the exterior, but the overhanging upper storeys remained, nor were there any considerable additions to the already

existing buildings, or improvements in the narrow and ill-kept lanes and by-streets. There was no paved footway, the path was only divided from the road by a few posts at uncertain distances, and there was no drainage worthy of the name.

The great sanitary event of those days was the scheme of Sir Hugh Myddelton for the formation of an artificial stream (afterwards called the New River) from the springs and wells near Ware, in Hertfordshire, to Islington and the northern part of London.

In this enterprise James took considerable interest, and advanced some portion of the money necessary to initiate it, but on the condition that he should participate largely in the future profits of the undertaking. This arrangement explains the reservation of a number of King's shares, which at a more recent date became an excellent investment and yielded enormous interest. The scheme was laid before the Common Council of the City in 1608-9; the company was incorporated in 1619, six years before James's death. Though the business of the tankard men in conveying water from the conduits for the supply of the houses continued, and part of the duty of City apprentices was that of carrying water for daily consumption, many houses were supplied by leaden pipes, and the completion of the New River, in 1620, on which occasion the King conferred on Hugh Myddelton the honour of knighthood, was a considerable improvement.

The water was carried through the northern part

of London, and as far as beyond Fleet Street, or as a prologue of a later date says—

> "While thirsty Islington laments in vain,
> Half the New River roll'd to Drury Lane."

Myddelton himself was nearly ruined by his enterprise, so that he sold his interest to the company, with the poor proviso that he and his heirs should receive for ever £100 a year, an annuity the claim for which ceased in 1715, so that the projector of the scheme, who was a Welshman and member of the Goldsmiths' Company, had little reward, or, as Howell, in one of his interesting letters, said, "Witness that cold reward, or rather those cold drops of water which were cast upon my countryman, Sir Hugh Myddelton, for bringing Ware river through her streets, the most serviceable and wholesome benefit that ever she received."

It may have been from a philosophical view of his experience as an inmate of the Fleet that Howell, in his letter of August 2, 1643, said, "Let the English people flatter themselves as long as they will that they are free, yet they are, in effect, but prisoners, as all other islanders are."

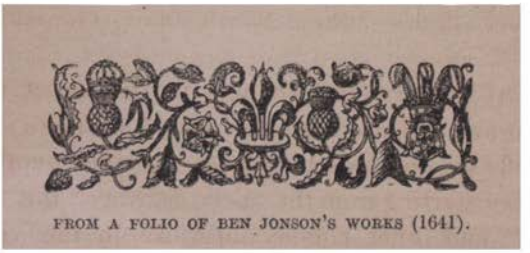
Both Howell and Myddelton were to be seen in the Highway of Letters. In fact, James Howell, whose letters are still largely quoted in reference to his times, wrote several of his amusing, undated epistles while he was a prisoner in the Fleet, though they were apparently addressed from several different places, and to various persons of distinction. Another

eminent representative of the famous street was Michael Drayton, the poet, who, it is recorded, lived at "the baye windowe house" next the east end of St. Dunstan's Church. His monument, with the line epitaph written by Ben Jonson, is in Westminster Abbey. There, also, we see the monument

THE SAVOY IN 1650.

to another of the famous inhabitants and representatives of the Highway of Letters—the gentle, loyal, and accomplished Abraham Cowley, who was born in Fleet Street, where his father was in business, Aubrey says as a grocer; but as Aubrey was often inaccurate, and other records make the elder Cowley a stationer, this is uncertain. At any rate, Abraham Cowley is one of the poets an acquaintance with whose poetical works is supposed to be necessary for a claimant of a knowledge of English literature, though he is not often read for recreation. Dr. Johnson

placed him among the chief "metaphysical poets," and appreciated his learning—for he took a doctor's degree, studied science, and especially botany, as a suitable accompaniment to poetry, and at an early age wrote some plays, one of which, *The Guardian*, was, later, converted into a comedy called *Cutter of Coleman Street*. He was treated with the gross ingratitude usually shown by "the Merry Monarch" to people who had done signal service to the cause of the Stuarts. Cowley had been distinguished for loyalty, which, in the time of the Commonwealth, had exposed him to difficulties, if not to serious injury. Before the death of Oliver Cromwell he had removed to a small farm at Chertsey, of which he had been permitted to become the purchaser. He lived till 1667 without the reward for his services which he had reason to expect, but he had made a great and deserved reputation by the ability and variety of his published works. Even the mastership of the Savoy, for which he had made application, was refused him.



FROM A FOLIO OF BEN JONSON'S WORKS (1641).

RICHARDSON READING FROM THE MS. OF "SIR CHARLES GRANDISON."
(From a Sketch made at the time by one of the Party.)

CHAPTER XIV.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE FIRE.

Increased Number of Coaches—Taylor, the Water Poet—Tobacco—The "Counterblast"—Shoe Lane—Bangor House—Izaak Walton—General Monk in Fleet Street—John Florio—Decreetz—Lovelace—His Grave in St. Bride's—Pepys at the Cockpit—Hogarth in Harp Lane—Oldbourne Hall—Bishop Dolben—St. Andrew's Workhouse—Chatterton—An Obliterated Graveyard—St. Bride's Church—Richardson—Stationers' Hall—Portraits—Steele—The Company's Plate—The School—Milton in Fleet Street—Lilburne—Prynne—Andrew Marvell—Oliver Cromwell—Fetter Lane.

ONE of the principal changes in the aspect of the Highway of Letters in the time of James I. was caused by the rapid increase in the number of coaches, starting from the "Belle Sauvage," the "Black Lion," and other famous inn-yards in the vicinity. In vain did Taylor, "the water poet," deplore the injury done to the numerous pliers of the oar

upon the Thames; and though James ordered the revival of the Lord Mayor's shows, which had, for some years previously, been discontinued, they

OUTER COURT OF LA BELLE SAUVAGE, 1828.

were not made occasions for river pageants, but were processions from Guildhall to Westminster, through Chepe, Fleet Street, and the Strand.

In 1608, so great was the influx of native and foreign visitors, that storehouses were erected at Bridewell, in expectation of a dearth of provisions.

Perhaps the dread of the plague may account for

the enormous number of tobacco-shops, of which it was said there were seven thousand in 1614–15, in spite of the King's "Counterblast"!

In Fleet Street and some of its tributaries there were still many dwellings of importance, and some of them were regarded as desirable, and even fashion-

THE "BLACK LION," WHITEFRIARS.

able, residences at a much later date—among them Bangor House, in Shoe Lane, named after the house of the Bishops of Bangor, the last of the episcopal residents being Bishop Dolben, who had been Rector of Hackney, and died in 1633. Many of the houses had gardens, and were pleasant places enough, when there was no plague in the vicinity. There was very good fishing in the Thames, too, as Izaak Walton well knew, and afterwards recorded, when, in the intervals of his country excursions, he went angling from a wherry

between London Bridge and the Temple. Izaak, as we have had occasion to mention, lived at the second house on the west side of Chancery Lane, next door to that once famous Fleet Street inn, the "Harrow." Here he carried on the business of a linen-draper, in 1624, occupying half the shop, the other half being that of a hosier, named John Mason. He afterwards removed to the seventh house on the same side, where he changed his business to that of a "sempster," or milliner.

Walton's "Compleat Angler" is still a standard book, because of its fresh and delightful style—the style that indicates a healthy and simple man. His biographies of Donne, Wotton, Hooker, Hubert, and Sandison are also known, and though he left Fleet Street for Winchester—where he died in 1683—he had long been associated with it, for he lived to be ninety years old—a result, perhaps, of those pleasant excursions and temperate habits, the descriptions of which are still such agreeable reading. The author of the "Gentle Art" went to Harp Alley, in Shoe Lane, to buy his fish-hooks from Mr. Kerbye, "the most excellent hook-maker that the nation affords."

Shoe Lane was a thoroughfare of considerable importance, for it extended from Fleet Street to Holborn, by St. Andrew's Church, the whole length of the present lane, and of what is now St. Andrew's Street. The great conduit which stood at the Fleet Street end has already been referred to. It was near this conduit that General Monk lived, and to his lodging there he returned when he had marched

his troops into the City for the purpose of restoring the Stuarts, by bringing Prince Charles into England after the collapse of Richard Cromwell, Oliver Cromwell's son and successor. We can almost imagine the solid-faced, reticent, heavy-looking, determined man, standing there in his great boots, looking towards St. Paul's, and speculating what next move would be for his own best advantage, or what kind of advice he would have from his wife, the blacksmith Clarges' daughter, and once a milliner, who had been his mistress, but was shortly to be raised, with him, to the peerage, and to become Duchess of Albemarle.

One of the best-known dwellers in Shoe Lane was John Florio, the once famous author of an Italian and English dictionary, and of a good many other books with fanciful titles, now little remembered. He was descended from an Italian family of Waldensian refugees, settled in London; had taught French and Italian at Magdalen College, Oxford, and had been tutor, not only to Prince Henry, eldest son of James I., but to the Queen Anne of Denmark, to whom he dedicated his dictionary, under the title of "Queen Anne's New World of Words." He translated "Montaigne," of which there is a copy in the library of the British Museum, bearing the autograph of William Shakespeare. This is said to be the only known book with the signature of the great dramatist, who is supposed to have made considerable use of it in writing some parts of "The Tempest."

John Decreetz, serjeant painter to James I. and

Charles I., was another inhabitant of Shoe Lane; and in what was one of the mean off-shoots of the thoroughfare, Gunpowder Alley, died the elegant and accomplished Richard Lovelace, handsomest and most

IZAAK WALTON'S HOUSE AT THE CORNER OF CHANCERY LANE AND FLEET STREET.

distinguished among those young cavaliers who were ruined in health and fortune by their loyalty to the first Charles Stuart. Lovelace was famous in his own time for his personal charm and personal beauty. His fame has survived as a poet, who, if he had written

nothing more than the exquisite verses "To Althea from Prison," containing the lines—

> "Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage,"

would still deserve to be remembered.

At the death of the King he was released from gaol, to which he had been committed by the Parliament, but he had consumed all his estate, he grew melancholy, and suffered from sickness, which ended in consumption. He was buried at the west end of St. Bride's Church. In his last days he was chiefly supported by the contributions of friends. Aubrey says that for some months George Petty, a haberdasher of Fleet Street, carried twenty shillings to him every Monday morning from Manny and Charles Cotton.

Leigh Hunt supposed that Richardson—familiar with the locality because of his house and printing office being in Salisbury Square, opposite—and knowing the story of Lovelace, borrowed his name for the hero of "Clarissa."

To Cockpit Alley, Shoe Lane, Pepys went on the 21st December, 1663, "to see a cock fighting at a new pit there, a spot I was never at in my life; but Lord! to see the strange variety of people, from Wildes, that was Deputy Governor of the Tower, when Robinson was Lord Mayor, to the poorest 'prentices, bakers, brewers, butchers, draymen, and what not, and all these fellows, one with another, cursing and betting. I soon had enough of it." It was in Harp Lane,

leading from Shoe Lane, that Hogarth and a companion painter opened an exhibition of sign-boards—a collection of grotesque paintings, intended to ridicule some of the pictures of the day. The real joke seems to have been that they were taken seriously, as sign-boards actually exhibited for sale; and as about that time it was being proposed, as a measure of public safety, that projecting signs should be abolished, and no sign-boards permitted, except such as were placed flat against the walls, there may have seemed to be some grounds for regarding the exhibition as a genuine trade enterprise.

Two most important buildings in Shoe Lane were the ancient "Oldbourne Hall," mentioned by Stow as being let out in tenements, even in his time, and the house or mansion of Bangor Place, the town residence of the Bishops of Bangor till the time of Charles I., when it was purchased by Sir John Barkstead for the purpose of erecting other tenements. As we have seen, the last Bishop of Bangor who lived there was Dolben, who died in 1633; but the old place was not utterly destroyed, for early in the last century the building, or what was left of it, was included in a workhouse, or poorhouse, of the parish of St. Andrew, and was known as Shoe Lane Workhouse, a queer, ramshackle old place, which, with the adjoining property, was in the trust of the Thavie estate, along with Thavie's Inn. The locality has undergone successive changes, which have left few landmarks by which to associate it with its earlier history. One of its chief features was the burial

ground given by the Earl of Dorset to the parish of St. Bride, in 1610, on condition that there should be no more interments on the south of St. Bride's Church, where Dorset House then stood. This burial ground remained in 1737, after Fleet Ditch had been arched over, and Fleet Market had been formed in the centre of the thoroughfare on the west side of Fleet Prison, to supersede Stock's Market, which had been taken for the site of the Mansion House.

Both Dorset House and St. Bride's Church were consumed in the Fire of London, and the restrictions on burials on the south of St. Bride's Church were relinquished. The burial-ground by Fleet Market, having been duly consecrated, was held by the parish at a quit rent, and the adjoining burial-ground of St. Andrew's parish, and of the parish workhouse in Shoe Lane, had also been established by the exertions of the Rev. W. Hacker, the rector of St. Andrew's. The pauper burial-ground, so far as can be made out, occupied the place where the rectory house now stands.

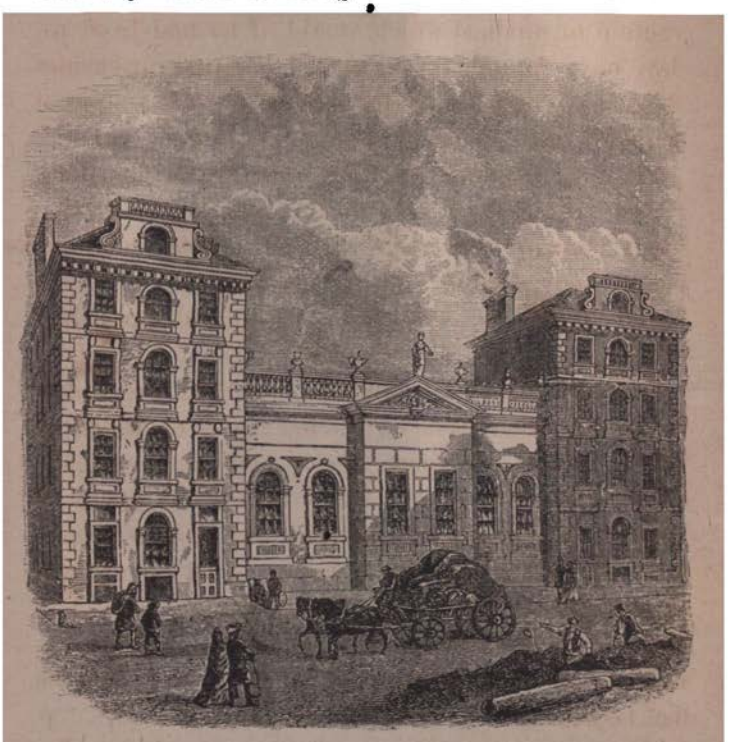
This is about the nearest guess that can be made, in endeavouring to imagine where the body was laid of that boy of remarkable genius who was found dead in his attic-lodging in Brooke Street, Holborn, with some grains of the arsenic with which he had poisoned himself still between his teeth. There is scarcely a more painful and pathetic story in literary history than that of this proud, sullen, sensitive, passionate youth, Thomas Chatterton, whose extraordinary ability was so allied to a peculiar moral

perversion that we forget we are condemning a child—or, at all events, a mere boy of wayward and irregulated mind—when we blame him for "forgeries" which were but simulations of ancient documents, the invention to produce which, would, if he had lived to-day, have brought him such fame that magazines would have been competing for his services as one of the most distinguished of rising fictionists.

It is a harrowing picture, that of the famishing youth refusing the offer of his poor landlady, the "sack maker" of Brooke Street, to return him sixpence from the amount of his week's rent, or to provide him with a homely meal, while he was barely keeping body and soul together by eating a daily portion of a stale twopenny loaf. He had not money to pay the baker's wife for the few loaves on which he had subsisted for some weeks, and his friend Mr. Cross, a chemist in the same street, was afraid of arousing his indignation by inviting him to supper. Cross either gave or sold him a small quantity of arsenic, with which, as he represented, he wished to make an experiment. The experiment succeeded. It was that of opening the door of death, at which he had been lingering in want and madness.

The end was the parish funeral, the undistinguished grave, the entry in the register of burials of the church of St. Andrew's, Holborn, under the date August 28th, 1770—"William Chatterton, Brooks Street." Even his first name was erroneously entered, for he was only a pauper whom nobody owned; but it undoubtedly refers to Thomas Chatterton, and to the

entry a later hand has added the words, "the poet," with the signature "J. Mill," as though the person responsible for the explanation was known and his authority would be recognised. In one of the bio-



OLD ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL, 1750 (*p.* 296).

graphies a story is told of Chatterton's body having been (surreptitiously?) obtained and removed to Bristol, where it was interred in the churchyard of St. Mary Redcliffe, but this is not to be regarded as

authentic. The imperfect register is the sole official record. The house, No. 4, Brooke Street, in which the boy died, is no longer to be seen; grave and graveyard have been blotted out beneath the turmoil and traffic of street and market, for Fleet Market was removed further to the west in 1826, and took the name of Farringdon Market. This alteration obliterated a large portion of the burial ground, which was ordered to be paved before being converted into a market. Farringdon Street was formed into one wide thoroughfare, which included the market. Then the Fleet Prison—rebuilt after the former structure had been burnt by the Gordon rioters—was pulled down "for good."

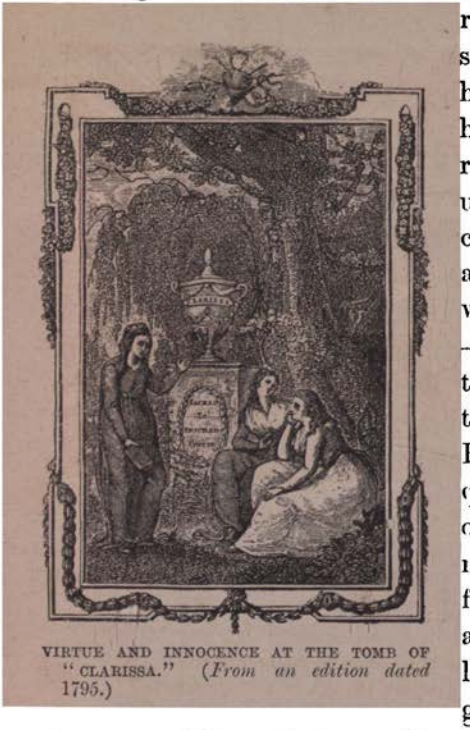
The area of demolition, called "the ruins," became for years afterwards a desolate and evil-haunted locality, whereabout the lingering remains of Fleet Ditch—a sluggish stream of filth hiding itself amidst the remnants of miserable but inhabited tenements—still polluted the air. The ruinous area became the resort of betting men, sharpers and ruffians, till preparations began for clearing it, and in 1866 the works for forming the viaduct which spans the Holborn Valley changed the aspect of the locality. The burial-grounds were obliterated, the workhouse in Shoe Lane had already disappeared, under the operation of the Poor Law Union, and now the remnant of Farringdon Market is being removed.

In old St. Bride's some distinguished persons were buried—Wynkyn de Worde, Sir Richard Baker, author of the "Chronicle," who died in the Fleet Prison, and

others; nor has the new church, built after the fire, been less remarkable in this respect, for one of the earliest buried there was Flatman, poet and painter, whose verse Lord Rochester accused Cowley of imitating; Francis Sandford, author of the "Genealogical History," who died in the Fleet Prison in 1693; the widow of Sir William Davenant and her son, Dr. Charles Davenant, another who died in the Fleet; and Robert Lloyd, a friend of Charles Churchill—1764. Three years before the latter date, a yet more famous man had been interred there—Samuel Richardson, the novelist and printer, author of "Pamela," "Clarissa Harlowe," and "Sir Charles Grandison," of whom, and of whose visitors at his house in Salisbury Square, there will be need to say something presently.

Richardson's grave, in the centre aisle, is marked by a flat stone, and on the opposite wall a memorial brass was not long ago erected by Mr. Joshua Butterworth, who was at the time Master of the Stationers' Company, with which the memory of Richardson is so closely associated, as having served the office of Master in 1754. His portrait is in Stationers' Hall with those of Steele, Prior, Dr. Hoadley, Bishop of Bangor, Vincent Wing, the astrologer, first compiler of those sheet almanacs of which the Company of late years had the monopoly, and others, including Robert Nelson, supposed author of the "Whole Duty of Man," and looking, as Leigh Hunt says, "the prototype of Sir Charles Grandison, as regular and passionless in his face as if he had been made only to wear his wig."

The same is not to be said of the face of Steele, with his black eyes, chubby, short face, and jovial aspect, and still less of Richardson, who, instead of being the smooth, satisfied-looking personage represented in some engravings of him (which make his heartrending romances appear unaccountable and cruel), has a face as uneasy as can well be conceived—flushed and shattered with emotion. Stationers' Hall used frequently to be let on hire for dinners, meetings, concerts, funerals, lotteries, and in 1745 was lent to the Surgeons' Company "upon conditions that no dissections were made therein." Leigh Hunt thought it was here that Steele and Bishop Hoadley were present at an anniversary dinner, when an inferior officer of the Company, with the reputation of a humorist, came in on his knees to drink to "the Glorious Memory" (of William III.). It was evident that he was drunk—Steele himself very



VIRTUE AND INNOCENCE AT THE TOMB OF "CLARISSA." (*From an edition dated* 1795.)

probably pretty well on—and the bishop was a little embarrassed, when Steele whispered to him, "Do laugh, my lord; pray laugh—'tis humanity to laugh." The good-natured prelate complied, and Steele wrote

INTERIOR OF (THE PRESENT) STATIONERS' HALL.

to him next day a penitential letter, in which occurs the admirable couplet:—

> "Virtue with so much ease on Bangor sits,
> All faults he pardons, though he none commits."

In 1654 the Stationers' Hall, formerly 'Bergavenny House, was so much out of repair that the livery dinner had to be held elsewhere, and in the following year the "Book of Martyrs" was sold to pay for the rebuilding. This book had been frequently reprinted, and when, in 1631, it was out of print, some "persons of quality," being desirous that it might be reproduced

for the general good of the kingdom, threatened to print it themselves if the Company did not immediately issue a fresh edition. A copy of the "Book of Martyrs," of the best paper, ruled, bound in Turkey leather, gilt, with the King's arms stamped on it, was presented to Charles II. in 1660, "as a token of the Company's duty and submission to his royal person and government."

Six years afterwards the hall, which had been rebuilt, perished in the Great Fire, and all its contents, including the seal of the Company, appear to have been consumed. Fortunately the registers were saved, probably because they were at the clerk's house on Clerkenwell Green. In 1674 the building of another hall was finished, and the Court agreed with Stephen Colledge (the famous Protestant joiner who was hanged at Oxford in 1681) to wainscot the hall "with well-seasoned and well-matched wainscot" for £300. That he did his work well may be seen by its present condition. It was once the custom to crown the Master and Wardens with garlands on their election, as in the Barbers' Company the custom is observed of placing coronets, or caps of maintenance, on the heads of those officers. It was also customary for each Master of the Stationers to present the Company with a piece of plate, weighing not less than fourteen ounces, so that we find records of "spones of sylver gylt," "a salte with a cover," "a bowle parcell gylte," "a cuppe all gylte, with a cover, of the gyfte of Master Way, called a mawdelen cuppe," and a number of silver-gilt and all-

gilt spoons, from well-known printers, like Tottell, Jugge, Day, and others. In 1643, however, the Company's plate, except a "standing cup," was sold, and out of the proceeds £120 lent on the security of the plate, and various other sums, amounting to above £1,500 (which had been borrowed to meet the Company's proportion of the royal loans), were repaid.

The Stationers' Company is comprised of members of the trade only, and in this respect is a rare, if not the only, survival of what City guilds were originally intended to be—the list of its Masters and officers including some names of printers and publishers which may be said to be historical in their association with the Highway of Letters.

The foundation of the well-known school maintained by the Company was £1,000, given by Alderman John Morton, Master in 1607, 1611, and 1612. The income of the lands bought with this sum was originally to be lent to five young men of the Company, but the amount was afterwards used for the purchase of houses in Wood Street, the rentals of which, together with other bequests to the Company, went to the establishment of the Stationers' School, which in 1861 was opened as a middle-class day school for boys, on the site of the house in Bolt Court, the latest residence of Dr. Johnson, and afterwards occupied by Mr. Thomas Bensley, a printer.

A scheme is now being carried out for the removal of the school from this crowded locality to Hornsey Vale, where about two acres of suitable land

have been purchased, and plans have been prepared by the architect. In this transference the school is but following the example of the Charterhouse, St. Paul's, and other City foundations. St. Paul's, occupying a site facing the east-end of the Cathedral, was demolished in 1886, the school being removed to the Hammersmith Road.

The fame of St. Bride's Church before the Fire of London, and its association with the Highway of Letters, of which it has ever been a landmark, may be said to have been chiefly emphasised by Milton having had a dwelling in the churchyard, at the house of a tailor, named Russell, where he first undertook the instruction of his sister's two sons.

It is easy to understand that when he had left this lodging and sought retirement and space for his library in the quiet garden house in Aldersgate Street, the man who wrote on the liberty of unlicensed printing, and was in the thick of the tempest of pamphlets and essays which broke out in Fleet Street during the period that ended in the Protectorate, was often a foremost figure in that highway.

The great thoroughfare just before that time had been the scene of savage punishments inflicted on pamphleteers, who were themselves uncompromising and often unscrupulous, and lost their ears or had their noses slit, or were branded in the face at the end of Fetter Lane, or stood in the pillory at the Temple, as Prynne and John Lilburne did—men who could not be silenced, even by gagging, and who gloried in what was intended to be their shame, but which,

instead of being a mark of infamy, became a distinction, as the scars of wounds received in a conflict for freedom.

One can imagine Milton's beautiful face, at which passengers in Fleet Street must so often have turned

PORTRAIT OF STEELE. *(From the Engraving for John Nichols's Editions of his Letters, &c.)*

to look, as he passed towards Whitehall or Lincoln's Inn—a face, the features of which were so delicate and regular, that while he was at college the accomplished youth had been called "the lady of Cambridge." One can imagine at a later date, when those gentle eyes were growing dim, and the Latin secretary (or foreign secretary) of the Lord Protector needed help in his work, Milton and Andrew Marvell

passing along Fleet Street towards the lodging of the latter, in Maiden Lane, near the Strand. With what pleasure must the two poets have talked, as they strolled, or sat on a bench in the Temple Gardens—how Marvell must have risen to the height of Milton's great imaginings—how the author of "L'Allegro" must have caught the flavour of Marvell's wit and pungent epigram—how ardently he must have admired the incorruptible soul of the man who, when he was so poor that he was about to dine off a broiled blade-bone of mutton, insisted on returning to his friend Danby, who had called on him, an order on the Treasury for £1,000, slipped into his hand as a present, but intended as a bribe to secure either his support or his silence.

And that other figure from Lincoln's Inn, the plain, rather slovenly and ill-groomed young man from the country—he with the rugged face, the abrupt manner, the suit made by a country tailor, the heavy boots, the set, grim features, the great chin, the piercing eye, the wart upon his cheek—Oliver Cromwell, the farmer from Cambridgeshire, who was a student at Lincoln's Inn, and whose voice, harsh and strident when it was first heard in Parliament, afterwards echoed through Europe, when at the Courts of France and Spain and at the Vatican, it spoke a language which the enemies of England could not pretend to disregard or to misunderstand.

In the tremendous conflict the second episode of which terminated with the beheading of Charles the First, Fleet Street, by its *habitués*, by its outpouring

of pamphlets, "libels," and pasquinades, reflected the turbulent and changing aspects of the time. The political, the doctrinal (not to say the religious), the social changes—the alternating declarations and assumptions of Cavalier and Roundhead; of patriots like Hampden; of persecuting prelates like Laud; of thorough rulers by the sword and the assertion of Divine right like Strafford; of calm, dogged, determined upholders of civil and religious liberty like Pym; of the hundred differing and strenuous leaders of various sections of men of thought and action, or of men of selfish impulses—were all represented in this Highway of Letters.

The learned and accomplished Selden still lived in the Temple, near to Whitefriars; and Barebones (doubtless a corruption of Barbon or Barbonne, the name of a French or Walloon refugee family), the leatherseller, after whom a Parliament was nicknamed, dwelt in Fetter Lane.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

CHAPTER XV.

WHITE FRIARS AND THE PLAY-HOUSES.

Salisbury Court — Dorset Gardens — The Davenants — Betterton — Harris — Killigrew — The King's and the Duke's Theatres — Privilege of Sanctuary—"Alsatians"—Templars and 'Prentices —Censorship of the Press—Prosecution of Printers—Mutilation of Books.

THE fact that each end of the thoroughfare was a place of execution or of punishment made Fetter Lane notorious. But it had some famous inhabitants, notably Hobbes, of Malmesbury, author of the "Leviathan," who was celebrated before and after the Civil War and the Commonwealth. It is stated that Dryden for a time lived in this lane, but the date is uncertain, and the famous wit, poet, and king of the coffee houses is more certainly associated with Gerrard Street, Soho, in the later, and with Long Acre in the middle, part of his career, for he lived in both places, and was in each near to his daily resort, Will's Coffee House, in Russell Street, Covent Garden. Pope tells us that it was Dryden who made Will's Coffee House the great resort of the wits of his time. "After his death Addison transferred it to Button's, who had been a servant of his; they were opposite each other in Russell Street, Covent Garden."

But Dryden's footsteps echoed in Fleet Street as a dweller in the Highway of Letters and a ratepayer of St. Bride's, for among the eminent inhabitants of Salisbury Court (now Salisbury Square), Shadwell,

who wrote the play entitled *The Squire of Alsatia*; Lady Davenant, widow of Sir William, who succeeded Jonson as writer of masques and plays,

HOUSE SAID TO HAVE BEEN OCCUPIED BY DRYDEN IN FETTER LANE.

and was named Laureate after the Commonwealth; Betterton, Cave, Underhill, Sandford, and Harris, actors, who lived next the Duke's Theatre, in Dorset Gardens, we find the name of John Dryden. Dryden

may be said to have been for many years the acknowledged magnate of the world of letters and clubs, as distinctly as Ben Jonson had been before him, and even more generally than Samuel Johnson became, in the time after Pope, Swift, Addison, and Steele had passed from the world of letters, and the representatives of learning had occasionally resorted to Kensington Gardens, and had divided their time between Fleet Street and the neighbourhood of Soho and Leicester Fields.

As to the former precinct of the Carmelites, or White Friars, the church and buildings of the monastery, after the dissolution of the religious houses, had given place to "many fair houses, built for lodgings for noblemen and others," and had long disappeared, except that first, in about 1580, the old refectory of the monastery, which stood outside the garden wall of Dorset House (the Inn of the Bishops of Salisbury), was transformed into a place where plays and interludes were acted, and then, in 1580 a theatre was built on the site of it. The old building—though it was said to have been used for thirty years for performances given by "the Children of her Majesty" (Queen Elizabeth)—seems never to have been in vogue for the representation of plays. In fact, the same chronicle informs us that it had "little or no furniture for a playhouse, saving an old tattered curten, some decayed couches, and a few worne out properties and pieces of arras for hangings to the stage and tire-house." The rain had made its way in, and, says the chronicler, "if it be not

repaired it must soone be plucked down, or it will fall."

It was "plucked down," but the building which took its place, as "the Whitefriars Theatre," seems to have had little success, and so little, or so ill, fame, that, although the name of the theatre appears on a play—*Woman is a Weathercock*—printed in 1612, and performed by the Children of the Revels to James's queen (Anne of Denmark), the building was also pulled down very shortly after that date.

The two theatres which afterwards appeared in the same locality—the Salisbury Court Theatre, built in 1629 by the players, Richard Gunnell and William Blagrove, and the Dorset Gardens Theatre, opened in 1671 under the management of Lady Davenant (widow of Sir William Davenant), represented by her son Charles, Mr. Betterton, and Mr. Harris—occupied different sites, the former standing in the ground of the old barn, or granary, at the lower end of the old court of Salisbury House, the latter on the City side of Salisbury Court, where it had not only an open space in front for coaches to set down and take up visitors, but public "stairs" on the river side, for the convenience of those who went by the silent highway.

Salisbury Court Theatre was built in 1629, and was then spoken of by Howes as a "new, faire play-house, near the White-Fryers," and the seventeenth stage, or common playhouse, which had been made within the space of three score years in London and the suburbs. Its subsequent history was not long, for in 1649 it was pulled down by a company

of soldiers, "set on," as Howes says in his MS. notes, quoted by Collier, "by the sectaries of these sad times."

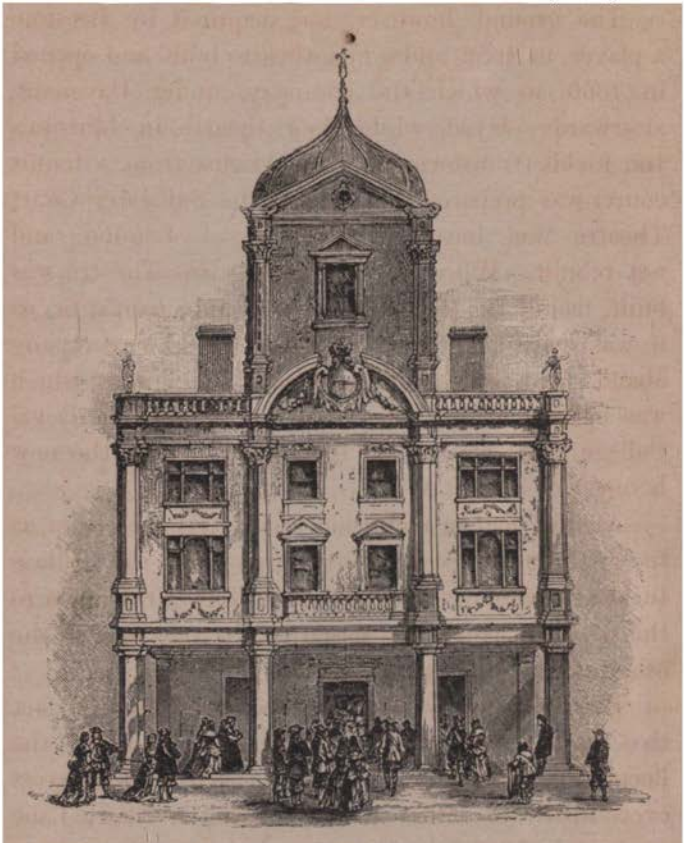
The ground, however, was acquired by Beeston, a player, in 1652, and a new theatre built and opened in 1660, in which the company, under Davenant, afterwards played, while their theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields (transformed to a playhouse from a tennis court) was prepared for them. The Salisbury Court Theatre was burnt in the fire of London, and not rebuilt. When the Dorset Gardens Theatre was built, facing the Thames, in 1671, Davenant's, or, as it was called, the Duke's (Duke of York's) company abandoned their place in Lincoln's Inn Fields, which was opened at the back of what is now the Royal College of Surgeons, and took possession of the new house in Whitefriars.

A good deal of confusion seems to have arisen as to the identity of these two theatres—the Duke's theatres—which can only be solved by a reference to the dates at which the name is given to one or the other of them (in Pepys' Diary, and elsewhere).

The confusion is, perhaps, accentuated by the fact that, on the death of Tom Killigrew, who had the licence, or patent, for the King's (Charles II.) players or company of actors at the theatre in Drury Lane (opened in 1663), the Duke's and the King's servants became one company, only eleven years after the Dorset Gardens, or new Duke's Theatre, had been opened.

The Dorset Gardens Theatre was afterwards

occasionally used for dramatic performances; but exhibitions of wrestling, fencing, prize-fighting, and other amusements were also held there by anyone



DORSET GARDENS THEATRE. (*From Settle's "Empress of Morocco."*)

who could afford to hire it. It has been mentioned, however, that in those days, and even as late as George III., "prize-fighting" did not mean boxing,

but fighting with weapons—mostly broadswords or sabres—in which one or other of the combatants, perhaps both, were severely wounded, and sometimes one was killed.

This will serve to explain the relations between the Duke's or Dorset Gardens, the King's or Drury Lane, and the Lincoln's Inn, Theatres, and their apparently transposable names, as we find mention of them in records of the time of Charles II. Dorset Gardens Theatre stood till 1720, when it was pulled down and the site was occupied as a wood or timber yard. As it was designed by Wren and adorned (so it is said) with sculpture by Gibbons, it seems to have been unnecessarily neglected.

The privilege of "sanctuary," which, before the dissolution of the monasteries, made a large portion of the precinct of Whitefriars a refuge for offenders against the law, was confirmed, and even enlarged, by James the First; so that it became a retreat for the dregs of society, who sought security from the punishment which they had incurred for their misdeeds. Fraudulent debtors hiding from their creditors, swindlers, bullies, thieves, base women, gamesters, and the lowest class of ruffians, took up their abode there. Their ranks were recruited by hopeless and abandoned wretches, who, from having been the victims of unscrupulous adventurers who dwelt in the locality, took up the business of decoys to strangers who wandered, or were enticed, into the foul and perilous dens of those lanes and alleys. The inhabitants of this region, dissolute and destitute, were able to lie con-

cealed from the officers of the law, or to defy efforts made to arrest them for crimes which were of almost daily occurrence within the limits of "the liberty."

To these were added reckless adventurers who had deserted, or returned, from serving in the inefficient force reluctantly sent by James to recruit the army of his son-in-law, the Elector Palatine. These semi-military, but not always courageous, scoundrels, gave to the locality the cant name of Alsatia.

This border-land beyond law and order was called after the territory of Alsatia, the frontier province of France, on the Rhine, well known to soldiers in the Low Country as a frequent scene of hostilities in defiance of the laws and claims of the adjoining Powers, which were under a settled Government, and may thus be said to have been represented by Fleet Street, and especially by the Temple, the seat of law adjoining Whitefriars.

Ram Alley, Mitre Court, and an adjoining lane, called by the cant name of Lombard Street, represented the main portion of Alsatia; and the locality maintained its evil notoriety till late in the reign of William III., when an Act of Parliament was passed for the suppression of "all such pretended privileged places upon penalties."

Speaking of this, Strype says:—"This place was formerly, since its building in houses, inhabited by gentry; but some of the inhabitants taking upon them to protect persons from arrests, upon a pretended privilege belonging to the place, the gentry left it, and it became a sanctuary unto the inhabitants, which

they kept up by force against law and justice; so that it was sufficiently crowded with such disabled and loose kind of lodgers.

"But, however, upon a great concern of debt, the sheriff, with the *posse comitatus*, forced his way in to make a search, and yet to little purpose; for the time of the sheriff's coming not being concealed, and they having notice thereof, took flight either to the Mint, in Southwark—another such place—or some other private place, until the hurly-burly was over and then they returned."

In Otway's play (1681) *The Soldier of Fortune*, and in Shadwell's *Squire of Alsatia* (1688), this notorious precinct holds a prominent part; and in the latter the descriptions of the *dramatis personæ* indicate the characters of the inhabitants. Readers of Sir Walter Scott will remember the vivid picture of Alsatia in "The Fortunes of Nigel," and the graphic description of the locality, the aspect of the shops, and the lively doings of the City apprentices, who feared neither Alsatian bully, "pert Templar," nor Court gallant.

Conflicts between the Templars and their unsavoury neighbours in Whitefriars were frequent, and often resulted in serious injuries. Any attempt by the gamesters, bullies and thieves of Alsatia to invade the precinct of the Temple was instantly resented, and the intruders would at once be assailed in a fashion which mostly drove them back to their own quarter, where the clash of steel, the cries, yells, and curses of men, the shrill shrieks of women, and, perhaps, the

occasional sound of a pistol shot, would show that a desperate struggle was going on, in which the constables were mostly reluctant to interpose.

James the First, in one of his speeches in the Star Chamber, declared, in reference to the proclamation against the enormous increase of visitors and occupants of houses, that only three classes of people had a right to settle in London—the courtiers, the citizens, and the gentlemen of the Inns of Court. As at that time there were at each Inn of Court about 180 "fellows" studying law, as well as sixty barristers and twenty readers, the lawyers made a very considerable contingent, when we remember that later, in 1631, the Lord Mayor, in answer to a question from the Privy Council, computed "the number of mouths" in the City of London and the liberty to be 130,280. In the following year, 1632, Mr. Palmer, a large landholder in Sussex, was fined £1,000 by the Star Chamber for living in London (in one year) beyond the period prescribed for the residence of country gentlemen visiting the metropolis.

Amidst all the tumult and conflict in the purlieus of Whitefriars and the Temple, the retired and secluded portion of the latter does not seem to have been greatly disturbed, and the learned Selden, in his chambers in Paper Buildings, pursued his studies, and sent forth his wise and witty essays and sayings without other molestation except from the censorship of the press, ordered by a king whose jealousy, suspicion, and self-conceit made it difficult for any author so to trim his sails as to steer clear of

punishment by fine, imprisonment, or the burning of his books. As to excisions, they were so numerous that few books, either serious or satirical, except those by the King himself, or by his order, appeared as they were originally written. Printers were kept in constant apprehension lest they should incur the royal displeasure and perhaps lose their ears; and James, whose belief in his own ability to detect heresy and sedition was as strong as his belief in witchcraft, devoted as much time as he could spare from the favourite of whom he was afraid and the bottle which supported his courage and weakened his resolution, to the ordination of the literature, as well as of the law and the Gospel, of the country.

CHAPTER XVI.

EARLY NEWSPAPERS AND PAMPHLETS.

The *Mercuries*—Scurrilous News-letters—Pepys in Fleet Street—His Diary—The Court—The Stage—Prize Fights—The Rump—Coaches—Elias Ashmole—Freemasonry—Lilly, the Astrologer—Roasting the Rumps in Fleet Street—The Great Fire—St. Dunstan's and the Giants—Ned Ward—Cowper—The Booksellers' Tokens—The Rainbow—The Cock—Tennyson in the Highway of Letters—Will Waterproof—The Violet of a Legend amidst the Chops and Steaks—Pepys Making Merry at the Cock Tavern—Bankers in Fleet Street—The Grab of the Stuarts—Child's Bank—Christopher Wren—Titus Oates—Roger North at the Green Dragon—Petitioners and Abhorrers—Burning the Pope at Temple Bar—The New Temple Bar—The Heads above it—Goldsmith and Johnson—Aubrey—Dryden—Great Preachers in Fleet Street—Will's Coffee House—Addison—Defoe.

In speaking of Fleet Street as the Highway of Letters it must be remembered that it is only in the later part of its history that it has become the Highway of Newspapers. Though it is usually believed that the first newspaper was the *English Mercurie*, printed by Christopher Baker, printer to Queen Elizabeth, and containing some intimations of what was going on in the world after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, there is considerable doubt as to the authenticity of the date of that publication, two of the existing three copies being printed in comparatively modern type, and the third, a manuscript, showing evidences of belonging to the 18th century.

Nor would the small quarto pamphlets occasionally

published as "packets of news" be regarded as having much resemblance to the modern newspaper. During part of the time of the Thirty Years' War, the desire of the people of England to learn what was being done led to the conversion of the irregular pamphlet into a weekly publication, entitled, *The Certain News of the Present Week.* Similar pamphlets followed, and were continued in the time of Charles I.; but, as we have already noted, it was during the Civil War that the small quarto *Diurnals* and *Mercuries,* many of them rather political pamphlets and essays than actual news, were scattered broadcast, though they were not all printed in London but came from the various towns involved in the strife, and from the printing presses attached to the respective forces of the King and the Parliament.

There were a good many *Mercuries* among them, as well as *News, Tidings,* and *Special Passages,* from Hull, York, Ireland, and other places, and some of the papers were distributed three times a week, many of these being satires or pasquinades, and few of them remarkable for literary ability or considerable wit.

It has been truly said that the period from the middle of the 17th to the middle of the 18th century was the age of pamphlets, and the succeeding period has been the age of periodicals and newspapers. The publications of the former period, professing to give information of current events in political affairs, were news books, and were called so. They were

partisan sheets, and their news was more like the gossip of a somewhat scurrilous London letter, or the leader in a rather unscrupulous weekly newspaper of later times. *Mercurius Britannicus, Mercurius Mastix, Heraclitus Ridens, Democritus Ridens,*

ROASTING THE RUMPS IN FLEET STREET AT THE RESTORATION (*p.* 324).
(*From an old print.*)

and the intelligences professing to give local, provincial, or foreign news, devoted a considerable portion of the small space at disposal to satire or abuse.

Sir Roger L'Estrange, who had returned to England under the Cromwellian Act of Indemnity, set up *The Public Intelligencer* after the Restoration, but it differed little from other news pamphlets, and was relinquished in 1665, when the *Oxford Gazette*, published by the Government while the Court was at Oxford to avoid the plague, was brought to

London and re-named *The London Gazette*, a title which it has maintained ever since. This was, perhaps, the nearest approach to the modern newspaper, until Daniel Defoe, in 1719, helped to start the *Daily Post*, to which he was a brilliant anonymous contributor, as he was to other papers published at the same period. Defoe may be said to have been the first of those who understood what is now known as journalism, and from his pungent and prolific pen a constant succession of "leading articles," advocating broad and advanced views, appeared in the periodical literature of that age. His *Review*, like its successors in the time of Addison, Steele, and Swift, bore more resemblance to the magazine than to regular newspapers, like the *London Daily Post* and *General Advertiser*, published in 1737, six years after his death, the *General Advertiser*, issued in 1744, when Samuel Johnson, thirty-five years of age, was writing for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and the *Public Advertiser* (in 1752), to which Henry Fielding was a contributor, and in which the "Letters of Junius" appeared.

Among those who were *habitués* of Fleet Street at the time that Monk marched his army into London, and for ten years afterwards, the most familiar, though not the most conspicuous, figure was that of the man of whom we spoke in the last chapter, and whose diary is to modern readers the most interesting of all gossiping records—Samuel Pepys—who, as Clerk of the Acts to the Admiralty, had constant opportunities of observing the vices

and depravity of the Court and of the King, and has left an account of the manners and social aspects of the period. "Pepys' Diary," not being intended for publication, was written in a kind of cryptograph, or shorthand, and was, within living memory, translated after being discovered in the library at Magdalen College, Cambridge, where the writer had deposited it.

Living first in Axe Yard, Westminster, then in Seething Lane, near the Admiralty Office, and afterwards in York Place, Buckingham Street, Strand, the plump, pleasant little gentleman, who was such an accomplished musician, so fond of going to the play, and such an enthusiastic sight-seer in the intervals of his honest and assiduous attention to the duties of his office, must have been well known, and his broad-skirted suit, his white suit with silver lace, and the rest of his attire, of which he gives such amusing particulars, were to be seen pretty often at the Mitre and other taverns, where he dined well, but frugally, as a *bon vivant* should, when he was not entertaining friends at home, or visiting at all sorts of places, including the Wardrobe, where Lord Sandwich had taken up his abode, or at some of the houses of the nobility whom he met at Whitehall and at Westminster.

Almost the first entry in the diary relates to the time before the coming of the King, when the Rump Parliament was still sitting, with Lenthall as Speaker, and Barebones, the leather seller of Fleet Street, was a leader of the "fanatics." Even Pepys calls them fanatics, though he must have had something

of a struggle to get over his Presbyterian training. He does as other people do, in respect of looking after his own interest, by exhibiting loyalty to the Court and his own festive and somewhat irregular inclinations cause him to take "mighty pleasure" in gazing at shows, spectacles, entertainments, and assemblies of the Court beauties at Whitehall and elsewhere, to write in terms of somewhat questionable admiration of Lady Castlemaine and pretty Nell, and to repeat, not always in refined language (but we must remember that the diary was not intended for publication), stories not to the credit of the King, the Duke of York, or the Court circle. We must, however, give him the credit of admiring the beauty of his really handsome young wife, when comparing her with other women, and of attending public worship with as great regularity as he visits the playhouses, or goes to witness a prize fight or any other spectacle by which his insatiable curiosity is excited.

Certainly Pepys, in his diary, throws a strong sidelight on the abominably dissolute character of the King and the dull debauchery of his brother, the Duke of York, afterwards James II. It has also been remarked that, though the self-conscious, priggish little Clerk of the Admiralty, the *protégé* of the by no means immaculate Lord Sandwich, shows little regard for the memory of the Lord Protector, during whose rule he was bred and "brought up," his references to Cromwell would supply a better and more truly respectful estimate of the great man's character

than would be furnished by quotation from his most able panegyrists.

It may have been a deeply-seated appreciation of the early influences under which he was educated, as well as a personal inability to comprehend the broad but subtle satire of Butler, which prevented his appreciation of the pungent wit and odd vagrant humour of "Hudibras." On December 26th, 1662, he wrote:—"To the Wardrobe. Hither came Mr. Battersby; and we, falling into discourse of a new book of drollery in use, called 'Hudebras,' I would needs so find it out, and met with it at the Temple; cost me 2s. 6d., but when I came to read it, it is so silly an abuse of the Presbyter Knight going to the warrs that I am ashamed of it; and by-and-by, meeting of Mr. Townsend at dinner, I sold it to him for 18d."

But on the 6th of February we find him at a bookseller's in the Strand buying another copy, "it being certainly some ill humour to be so against that which all the world cries up to be the example of wit; for which I am resolved once more to read him and see whether I can find it or no."

He did not succeed in persuading himself that there was much wit in "Hudibras," though he read the first part three times, and *borrowed*, instead of buying, the second part, in St. Paul's Churchyard at his bookseller's, where he afterwards bought it, along with some other books (including Fuller's "Worthies") "all of good use or serious pleasure."

There are ample evidences that Pepys had an

open mind and was willing to test his conclusions, but he had no great gift of humour, and, from his repeated remarks, evidently could not appreciate the finer and most imaginative plays of Shakspeare. Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* and the *Silent Woman* were more within his compass, though he was an assiduous reader, a fair scholar (having completed his education at Oxford), and a man of acute observation for passing events and peculiarities of character. It is amusing to read his remarks, not only on plays and the company on and before the stage, but on sermons and preachers. On the 9th of November, 1662, he writes, "(Lord's Day)—Walked to my brother's, where my wife is, calling at many churches, and then to the Temple, hearing a bit there, too, and observing that in the streets and churches the Sunday is kept in appearance as well as I have known it at any time."

As a series of vivid sketches of the manners of the time and the aspects of the City immediately after the Restoration, Pepys' Diary is invaluable. It must be remembered that considerable changes had taken place during the later years of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate.

Though Milton was the Censor of the Press under the latter *régime*, it may be supposed, not only that he exercised his authority with just regard to the "liberty of prophesying," but that he himself wrote a good many of the articles that appeared in the news sheets. It must be remembered that the Star

Chamber had been abolished in 1641, but after the Restoration Charles II. and his Ministers continued to clap a good many people into prison, and judges too often suborned juries. Whipping at the post or the cart's tail was frequent, the pillory was in full swing, and the Fleet Prison received many whose debts were made the instruments for political punishments. The theatres had been pulled down after the suppression of stage plays in 1642. Those in Salisbury Court, in Drury Lane (the Cockpit and the Phœnix), Blackfriars, and Bankside had disappeared. Those in Salisbury Court and Drury Lane, which had been demolished by companies of soldiers in 1649, were afterwards rebuilt, as we have seen. The more rigid Puritan denunciation of stage plays was not so powerful as to prevent a revival of the stage by Sir William Davenant in 1652, and the introduction of operas at the same date, two years before Cromwell was made Lord Protector. There can be little doubt that his Highness was a patron of music, and that he was above the narrow prejudices which led many of the sectaries, who gave him continual trouble, to denounce all dramatic representations and all meetings for amusement and the lighter kind of recreation. The death of the Protector, fifteen months after he had been raised to that office, set everything in confusion again, and the Restoration, in 1660, though it did not at once demoralise the drama—for the plays of Shakspeare, Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, Cowley and others still held the stage—began that decadence

in morals which degraded the theatre for many years. Dryden had begun to write for the stage before Pepys was very far in his record of play-going, and though Tom Killigrew, the boon companion of Charles II., famous for his witty and indecorous stories, and the loose plays which he introduced at his theatres, took the taste of the depraved courtiers, there were still admirers of the more legitimate dramas, Pepys, who was serious-minded, in spite of his love for novelty and amusement, being one who did not altogether abandon his early training.

It may be mentioned that coaches had become common at the time of the Restoration, and the lumbering leathern vehicles went up and down the Highway of Letters, where occasionally the more fashionable "glass coach," a lighter coach, with windows of talc or glass, also spattered mud from the gutters over pedestrians, who shrank to the wall that they might avoid the polluting shower.

The first hackney coach stand had been set up, in 1634, at the Maypole, in the Strand, a few paces from Temple Bar, by Captain Baily, a sea-captain, Sedan chairs being introduced by Sir Saunders Duncomb, about the same time. The first sedan chairs had appeared as private conveyances at an earlier date. They were brought from the town after which they were named, a place which has become famous in these later days as the scene of the disastrous battle in which Napoleon III. was defeated by the German invaders. In January, 1635, a proclamation was

issued to restrain the multitude and the promiscuous use of coaches about London and Westminster. In 1662 it was ordered that the number of hackney coaches should not exceed 400, but in 1694 they increased to 700, and were largely augmented in subsequent years, though it seems strange that in 1701 they amounted to only 1,000. In 1710, the year when, on the 1st of March, the first number of the "Spectator" was published, and Addison and Steele were representatives of the new departure in periodical literature, there were 800 hackney coaches and 200 hackney chairs in London, and the number was but little increased for thirty years after that date.

OLD ST. DUNSTAN'S CLOCK.

Among the people Pepys may have met in Fleet Street was John Locke, whose essay on the Human Understanding was written in, or at all events dated from, Dorset Court (1689). Elias Ashmole, the famous antiquary, lived in Middle Temple Lane, where his fine library and collection of coins and

curiosities, which he had been accumulating for thirty years, were destroyed by fire.

On the 23rd of April, 1661, Pepys, in his black silk suit, the first day he had put it on that year, went in a coach to dine with the Lord Mayor, where he met "a great deal of honourable company," and at table talked with Esquire Ashmole, just appointed Windsor Herald, who assured him that "frogs and many insects do fall from the sky ready formed." Ashmole was a member of the Society of Astrologers, one of the earliest members of the Royal Society, and a famous Freemason. Not long ago a Masonic function was held in Sweden for his honourable remembrance, and the Lodge of Quatuor Coronati has reproduced a curious Masonic hieroglyph, in which a tree (the ash), with a little animal at its foot, somewhat resembling a mole, seems to be a rebus on the name of this celebrated master of the craft.

In the previous year (1660), the Court being in mourning for the Duke of Gloucester, brother of Charles II., Pepys had "bought a pair of short black stockings, to wear over a pair of silk ones," to match his black silk suit, and had for the first time taken a cup of tea, "a China drink," of which he had never drunk before. A few days afterwards he records that he went to Lilly's, the astrologer, where he was well received, there being "a clubb" that night among his friends. Among the rest was "Esquire Ashmole, who I found was a very ingenious gentleman. . . . I home by coach, taking Mr. Rooker with me, who did tell me a great many fooleries which may be done by

nativities, and blaming Mr. Lilly for electing to please his friends and to keep in with the times as he did formerly, to his great dishonour, and not according to the rules of art, by which he could not well erre as he had done."

The evident absence of all preparation, or writing for effect, gives the Diary an air of frankness and veracity which could scarcely have been possible in memoranda intended for publication. It is greatly to the credit of the man himself that some of the records—those of the domestic kind—disclose a certain tenderness and gratitude, which redeems much that appears to be mean and selfish in the small-beer chronicle. The more historical portion of them may be said to commence with the failure of Richard Cromwell, the opposition manifested by the citizens and the populace to the restored "Rump" Parliament, and the rumours that went this way and that with regard to the intentions of Monk when he marched his forces into the City and, in his stolid, silent way, waited to notice the temper of the people before declaring for Prince Charles, with whom he was in communication. The Mayor and aldermen had offered their houses for Monk and his officers; the soldiers were everywhere received with acclamations in the streets, and were plied with drink and money; Cheapside was aglow with bonfires; everywhere the church bells were ringing, because Monk was in favour of issuing new writs to fill up the House of Parliament, and refused to obey the order of the Rump to disarm the citizens and take away their charter. Fleet Street was ruddy with

the glare of bonfires, of which there were several between St. Dunstan's and Temple Bar. At Strand Bridge Pepys counted thirty-one fires, while everywhere there was shouting and drinking, and at the bonfires butchers and others expressed their political sentiments by roasting rumps of beef, and at the Maypole, in the Strand, made a great clatter by ringing a peal with their knives to call attention to the roast. On Ludgate Hill a man was turning a spit with a rump tied upon it, while another man basted it. At one end of Fleet Street it might have been thought that the Highway of Letters was on fire, and the heat was almost suffocating.

This was on the 11th of February, 1659-60, but it is not the first reference to Fleet Street, for the first entry in the Diary, on the 1st of January that year, records:—"(Lord's Day)—This morning (we living lately in the garret) I rose, put on my suit with great skirts, having lately not worn any other clothes but them, went to Mr. Gunning's chapel at Exeter House. . . . Dined at home in the garret, where my wife dressed the remains of a turkey, and in the doing of it she burnt her hand. I staid at home the whole afternoon, looking over my accounts; then went with my wife to my father's, and in going observed the great posts which the City workmen set up at the conduit in Fleet Street." This conduit, with others, was soon to run wine; ale was to be broached in the streets; Fleet Street was to be furnished with stages and balconies, beneath the windows, decorated with gay garlands and sumptuous hangings; the street

itself barricaded, that a great concourse of people might look on at the splendid procession by which the King was accompanied from the Tower to Whitehall, the day before his coronation, on the 23rd of April, 1661. Pepys, attired in a velvet coat, the first day that he had put it on, though he had had it for six years, was in the City with other good company, among whom was "Sir W. Pen." It was impossible, he said, "to relate the glory of this day expressed in the clothes of them that rid, especially the Knights of the Bath and their esquires. The streets were all gravelled, the houses, hung with carpets before them, made brave show, with the ladies out of the windows. So glorious was the show with gold and silver that we were not able to look at it, our eyes at last being so much overcome."

Of the two great calamities—though they have been regarded as a recurrent calamity and its remedy—the Great Plague and the Great Fire—there is no occasion to speak with special reference to Fleet Street. Not only in the chronicles of Pepys, but in the pages of Daniel Defoe, we meet with descriptions which leave little to be said that is either striking or original, though Defoe was born only about a year before London was devastated by the fell disease of the ravages of which he gives so vivid an account.

The Highway of Letters, as we know, was destroyed as far as the west corner of Chancery Lane, on one side, and the Temple Exchange Coffee House, close to the Temple, on the other. The Fleet and Bridewell, St. Bride's Church, Salisbury House, and the remaining

buildings of the Whitefriars, numerous taverns (including the ancient Horn tavern, which had belonged to the Goldsmiths' Company from the reign of Henry III., and was replaced by Anderton's Coffee House, to be in its turn replaced recently by Anderton's Hotel), coffee-houses, ancient Inns, or mansions of the nobility and clergy, perished in a heap of burning cinders. St. Dunstan's Church, in Fleet Street, remained, a good, handsome, freestone building, with a fair dial hanging over the street, as Strype informs us. This clock was not set up till 1671, and was the work of Mr. Thomas Harris, who lived at the end of Water Lane. He received £35 and the former clock of the church. At the same time two famous figures, representing giants or savages wielding clubs, were placed within a frame of architecture, and by the motion of the clockwork struck the quarters on two bells hanging within reach of their clubs.

Ned Ward, who kept a punch-house in Fulwood's Rents, Holborn, about 1723, and wrote "The London Spy," a book to which, notwithstanding its coarseness, most writers on London are indebted for graphic and grotesque descriptions of the manners of his time, wrote about a puppet show—

"We added two to the number of fools and stood a little, making our ears do penance to please our eyes with the concerted motion of their (the puppets') heads and hands, which moved to and fro with as much deliberate stiffness as the two wooden horologists at St. Dunstan's when they strike the quarters."

A very different man William Cowper, who, when

he was a student in the Temple, suffering from the melancholy mental affliction which led him to retire into the seclusion of Olney, wrote in "The Task"—

> "When Labour and when Dulness, club in hand,
> Like the two figures at St. Dunstan's stand,
> Beating alternately in measured time
> The clockwork tintinnabulum of rhyme,
> Exact and regular the sounds will be,
> But such mere quarter-strokes are not for me."

The old church was taken down in 1831-1833, and the present one built by Mr. Shaw, who copied the steeple of St. Helen at York. The figures were bought by the Marquis of Hertford, and removed to his villa in Regent's Park. It is said that they lately occupied a place in the grounds of Mr. Hucks Gibbs, in the same locality.

The statue of Queen Elizabeth, over St. Dunstan's Church doorway, formerly adorned the west front of Lud Gate, which, with two or three other principal City gates then remaining, was demolished in 1760.

Before the Great Fire the booksellers' shops were both in Fleet Street and St. Paul's Churchyard, Paternoster Row being the locality of the lacemen and silk mercers. We find Pepys buying books both at the Temple and at St. Paul's; but after the fire and the destruction of Stationers' Hall, the Churchyard and the Church of St. Faith, beneath St. Paul's, in the crypt of which many of the stationers and booksellers placed their stocks, the trade was for a time scattered from that neighbourhood, and on the rebuilding of London the business of the booksellers was to some extent transferred to the Row, while a

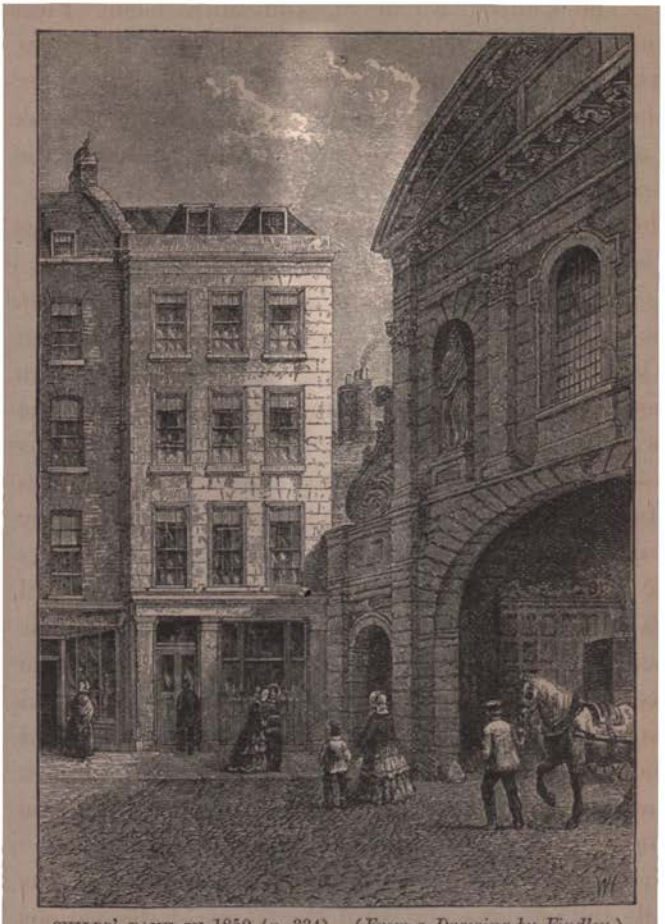
few of the silkmen took possession of shops in the Churchyard.

The Churchyard of St. Dunstan's, facing Fleet Street, and fitly representing the Highway of Letters, was nearly built-in by booksellers' and publishers' shops. We have already spoken of Smethwick "under the Diall," and Marriott, who published the first edition of Izaak Walton's "Compleat Angler" there, and advertised it, price 18d., in the *Mercurius Politicus*, May, 1653.

Among the famous footsteps in Fleet Street are to be included those of Dr. Donne the poet, and Dr. Thomas White, founder of Sion College, who were both vicars of St. Dunstan's. And among the printers and booksellers of Fleet Street at this period, besides those already noted, were Charles Harper, next door to the Crown in Chancery Lane, near Serjeants' Inn, and at the "Flower de Luce," over against St. Dunstan's Church; Daniel Pakeman, at the sign of the Rainbow; and Thomas Lee, at the Turk's Head, over against Fetter Lane (1677), where Sam Keble seems to have succeeded him in 1700. But the publishers had spread, and their numbers greatly increased in the Strand, St. Paul's Churchyard, Paternoster Row, Cheapside, The Poultry, and Holborn.

Fleet Street, like other highways of London, was still full of signs, and with the *signs* of the various shops were associated the *tokens*, or metal medals, issued by tradesmen and tavern-keepers, to represent small change—pence, halfpence, and farthings—and

to be exchanged for commodities at the counters of those who issued them. Without going into the



CHILDS' BANK IN 1850 (*p.* 334). (*From a Drawing by Findley.*)

origin or remote history of tradesmen's tokens, it may be recorded that the scarcity of small coin and

the objection to cut a penny in halves, or quarters, to represent halfpence and farthings (or fourthings), gave rise to the provision by shopkeepers of tokens, which were of recognised value at the place of issue, if not in general exchange.

In the time of Henry VIII. there were a number of leaden tokens in London. Queen Elizabeth, who improved the previously debased coinage, gave permission to certain towns, and to some individuals, to strike copper farthings and half-farthings; but James I. gave to his favourites the privilege of issuing copper coins or pledges, at a considerable profit on the weight of metal or of debased metal, and the circulation was made compulsory by an Order in Council. Charles I. carried this scandalous grant of privileges still further, and debased farthings or tokens were minted at a house in Lothbury, which consequently gave its name to Tokenhouse Yard.

Evelyn mentions "the tokens which every tavern and tippling-house, in the days of late anarchy among us, presumed to stamp and utter for immediate exchange, as they were passable through the neighbourhood, which, though seldom reaching further than the next street or two, may happily, in after times, come to exercise and busie the learned critic what they should signifie."

At the time of the Restoration, and at a later date, tokens were in considerable use, and were continued for some time, though Charles II. ordered some good copper farthings to be issued. There are some curious collections of tokens in the British

Museum, the Bodleian Library, and the Guildhall Museum, and the private coins mostly bear the name or initials of the tradesman who issued them, the date, and the sign of his shop. Those belonging to Fleet Street were mostly tavern tokens, and bore the sign and superscription of the Bear, the Bull's Head, the Sugar Loaf, the Cock, the Rainbow, the Dragon, the Hercules Pillars, the Castle, the White Hart, the Jerusalem, the Golden Angel, the Boar's Head, the Three Nuns, the Mitre, the Feathers, the King's Head, the Temple, the Three Squirrels, the Unicorn. Some of these signs survive to this day, and have taken a new lease of life, notably the Rainbow, near the Temple Gate, established as a coffee-house, and in 1657 kept by one James Farr, a barber, who was prosecuted, by the inquest of St. Dunstan's in the West, "for making and selling a sort of liquor called coffee, as a great nuisance and prejudice of the neighbourhood."

Groom's, next door to the entrance of the passage of the Rainbow, is now, as it long has been, famous for its coffee and tea. It became the resort of Fleet Street coffee drinkers at a later date, when the Rainbow became a tavern famous for haunches of venison, saddles of mutton, and other substantial fare, served at certain hours of the day, along with excellent wine, ale, and punch. It has now been acquired by Mr. Schüller, of the Café de Paris, at the foot of Ludgate Hill.

The Cock, which was once equally famous for its chops, steaks, rashers, welsh rarebits, fine old port,

and supremely good ale, once stood nearly opposite the Rainbow. Even till a recent date it preserved its old characteristics; its "boxes," or partitioned seats of dark polished mahogany, its portentous carved chimney-piece, said, without much warrant, to have been the work of Grinling Gibbons, its sawdusted floor and ancient knives and platters—we might almost say its ancient "drawer," or head-waiter—and its effigy of a Brobdingnagian rooster, in full crow, beside the entrance in Fleet Street, survived, and have been celebrated by the late Lord Tennyson, whose "Will Waterproof" eulogises the plump head-waiter at the Cock, the wine, the viands, and the long reputation of the historical tavern.

While the earlier pages of this gossiping record were passing through the press, the lamented death of the Poet Laureate placed a nation in mourning, and added to the sadder memories of the Highway of Letters. Though it is long since Alfred Tennyson was among the frequenters of the famous thoroughfare, he has left an imperishable reference to the once famous tavern and—

> "The plump head-waiter at 'the Cock,'
> To which I most resort."

He made a halo shine about

> "The waiter's hands, that reach
> To each his perfect pint of stout—
> His proper chop to each."

He made

> "The violet of a legend blow
> Among the chops and steaks."

The Cock has flown across the road now, and stands at th entrance of a passage leading to the tavern which has taken the sign, and some of the business, of the legendary resort of famous representatives of the Highway of Letters.

To go no farther back than 1665, when the plague was in London, we find the Old Cock tavern closely associated with the farthing tokens of that time; for *The Intelligencer* for July in that year contained an advertisement that "the master of the Cock and Bottle, commonly called The Cock, alehouse, at Temple Bar, hath dismissed his servants and shut up his house for this long vacation, intending (God willing) to return at Michaelmas next, so that all persons whatsoever, who have any accompts with the said master, or farthings belonging to the said house, are desired to repair thither before the 8th of this instant July, and they shall receive satisfaction."

In April, nearly three years afterwards, we find Mr. Samuel Pepys there, in rather sportive mood, having invited two ladies (one of them Mrs. Knipp, the actress) to supper, where they "drank, and eat a lobster, and sang, and were mightily merry."

The Devil and St. Dunstan's tavern, within Temple Bar, had its token and device of St. Dunstan holding the Devil by the nose. By the bye, did Mrs. Pepys think of that device when she threatened to pinch her husband with the tongs, because of his attentions to Mrs. Knipp?

Among the most important of the signs in Fleet Street were those of the bankers and goldsmiths.

That of Richard Blanchard and Francis Child (afterwards "Childs'," the oldest banking house in London), was distinguished by the sign of the Marigold, just within Temple Bar, on a site which is now difficult to distinguish. Childs, like other bankers in the time of Charles II., were goldsmiths with running cashes, and one of the partners, Alderman Backwell, was ruined on the shutting up of the exchequer by the profligate king, whose accounts for the sale of Dunkirk to the French remain among the records of the house. In the days of James I. and Charles I., wealthy persons and merchants deposited their money in the Mint, which was then within the Tower of London, or placed it with the principal goldsmiths, who also were custodians of plate and jewels. Charles I. seizing £200,000 of money in the Mint, and calling it "a loan," made depositors shy of that kind of security, and they transferred their deposits to the goldsmiths. Charles II. seized £1,300,000 deposited by the goldsmiths in the exchequer, in the faith that their property would be secure under a settled Government after the Restoration; and though there was such an outcry that the embezzling King was obliged to pay six per cent. interest, the capital was not entirely repaid, even in the time of William III., when the interest had been reduced to three per cent., and the Bank of England was incorporated.

In 1673-74 Major Pinckey, a goldsmith, lived at the Three Squirrels over against St. Dunstan's Church, and was succeeded by Goslings, afterwards Goslings and Sharpe. In 1693, Mr. Richard Hoare,

goldsmith, at the sign of the Golden Bottle (Mr. James Hoare was a goldsmith, with a running cash at the Golden Bottle, in Cheapside), is mentioned in the *London Gazette*, and one of his debtors was the famous Lord Clarendon, who owed him £27 10s. 3d. for plate.

The firm of Childs, the bankers, originated in the reign of Charles I., when Francis Child, the apprentice of William Wheeler, a goldsmith, whose shop was one door west of Temple Bar, married his master's daughter and became a partner in the business. "The Marygold," the sign of the house one door within Temple Bar, to which the business was removed when the firm became Blanchard and Child, is probably the device of Blanchard, as the original sign, French in decoration and design, bore the motto, "*Ainsi mon âme.*" The sign is still preserved by the modern representatives of the firm, and appears, or did lately appear, as the distinctive design on the cheques of Childs' bank. Childs' was the bank of the Court and the aristocracy. Prince Rupert had been a customer, and the King (Charles II.) kept his cash there, or, rather, used to draw cash out in a reckless manner when he wanted money for one or other of his mistresses. Perhaps the same reply might have been given to him as Mr. Coutts at a later date gave to the Duke of York, who proposed his health as "my banker for upwards of thirty years." "I beg your Royal Highness's pardon; it is your Royal Highness who has done me the honour to keep my money for thirty years."

At all events, the name of Child has become historical. Sir Francis Child, the second partner of the name, is he of whom we have just been speaking, and he became Lord Mayor, and represented the City in Parliament. He died, at a good old age, in 1713, and was succeeded by his son, Sir Robert, at whose death the second Sir Francis succeeded to the dignities which then appeared to be attached to the family. His daughter married the grandson of Alderman Backwell, so that practical justice seems to have been done to the descendant of the formerly ruined partner; and a grand-daughter married William Praed, a banker of Truro, who, nearly a century ago, also took up an abode and opened a bank at 189, Fleet Street.

The fire which devastated the City had left nothing of the former Highway of Letters, except a few houses by the Temple (Blanchard and Child's, the nearest to the Temple Bar), and some others opposite, between Chancery Lane and St. Dunstan's Church.

The houses, as we have seen, had mostly consisted of wood and plaster; such bricks as were used were poor in quality, and badly baked. The bulks, or shops where goods were set out for sale, were overhung by the upper storeys. Only a few of these ancient buildings now remain in London, but, notwithstanding their inconvenience and apparent insecurity, they lasted pretty well, and, though mostly wanting in light and air, were often picturesque and prettily ornamented.

The Fire of London had extended over nearly a

square mile, and 13,000 houses—many of them spacious and handsome mansions—and eighty-nine churches were consumed, and lay in ruins. It was a great opportunity for re-building the City on a plan which would have made it second to none in Europe; and Christopher Wren prepared a plan which would

WEST FRONT OF TEMPLE BAR IN 1710.

have achieved far more than has been done up to the present time, in making the highway from Temple Bar to St. Paul's, and the highway beyond it along Cheapside, a superb thoroughfare, flanked by a grand embankment, or terrace, on the river shore. This he was not permitted to carry out, or even to commence. Parsimony, including a regard for vested interests which would have had to be purchased, was displayed in the re-building of the City, as it was in the provision

of ships for the navy, and other national works; for the King grasped all the money he could beg, borrow, or steal, to squander it on the companions of his debaucheries.

Wren, who had attained distinction in mathematics and experimental philosophy at Wadham College, Oxford (Pepys calls him Dr. Wren), became assistant to Sir John Denham, who had been appointed Surveyor-general of his Majesty's Buildings, without any particular knowledge of the subject. Wren, however, soon became a practical and an eminent architect, and, before the fire occurred, had been requested by the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's to survey the Cathedral. The fire saved him that trouble, but gave him the splendid opportunity of building the vast structure which has ever since been associated with his genius and enterprise.

Even in this magnificent work, however, he was hindered, and his designs were greatly frustrated by the penurious manner in which the payments were made. The first stone was laid on the 21st June, 1675, by the architect and his special lodge of Freemasons, of which he was Master, "the Lodge of St. Paul's," afterwards re-named the "Lodge of Antiquity," by which the trowel and mallet are still preserved. Wren was twice elected Grand Master of the English Freemasons. The last stone of St. Paul's was set up in 1710. During that long period of thirty-five years, Wren was constantly passing up and down Fleet Street to superintend his

work, for which he received the miserable pittance of £200 a year; "and for this," as the Duchess of Marlborough said, "he was content to be dragged up in a basket three or four times a week."

But he had, at an early date after the fire, designed fifty of the churches which took the place of those that had perished. That of St. Bride, in Fleet Street, was completed in 1680; and so great had been his energy and untiring industry, that, in 1672, his services, unrequited by any adequate payment, were rewarded by the honour of knighthood. Two years later he married a daughter of Sir John Coghill, and, after her death, a daughter of Viscount FitzWilliam. He lived far into the reign of George I., and died at the age of ninety-one.

In rebuilding the City, the old lines of streets were mostly preserved, and Fleet Street was as little calculated to accommodate the lumbering coaches and the carriages, often drawn by four or six great Flemish horses, as it now is to receive its vast traffic of omnibuses, railway carriers' vans, cabs, carriages, and newspaper carts.

The rebuilding, however, went on so rapidly that the admiration of foreigners was excited by it; and ordinary houses in the Highway of Letters, though far from being either handsome, healthy, or commodious, and looking less picturesque than those that had been demolished, were more spacious and convenient, and were constructed of far better material than those which they replaced. Fleet Street was, in fact, much less remarkable for its improved dwellings than

other parts of the City, where wealthy merchants expended large sums of money on mansions, the fine proportions and sumptuous internal decorations of which were evidences of luxury and refinement, which may still be traced even in the few remnants of old examples to be discovered in buildings long ago converted into offices and warehouses.

Pepys had ceased to record the varying scenes and events in which he took part, before the changes had been entirely effected. He tells us of the roasting of the rumps in Fleet Street, near Temple Bar; but we have to gather information from another diarist of the demonstrations which took place when there was a reaction against Popery, and the perjuries of the infamous Titus Oates resulted in the execution of innocent persons, whom he denounced with unblushing effrontery.

It was suspected, truly enough, that the King, when he had any serious thoughts of religion, was secretly attached to the Roman Catholic tenets and observance. It was known that his brother, the Duke of York, was a pronounced Papist, and it was believed, also truly enough, that, should he succeed to the throne, he would endeavour to re-establish popery in England. So great was the excitement, that Charles sent his brother away, to avoid irritating the populace by his presence in London, and was himself alarmed lest he should be again "sent on his travels."

In 1687, on the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's birth, the popular protest took the form of an

extraordinary demonstration. A turbulent multitude marched in procession through the City to Temple Bar, and Roger North witnessed the extraordinary spectacle from the Green Dragon Tavern, and published an account of it in his *Examen.*

It was very dark when he and his friends posted themselves at the windows, "but we could perceive the street to fill, and the hum of the crowd grew louder and louder; and at length, with help of some lights below, we could discern, not only upward towards the Bar, where the squib-war was maintained, but downward towards Fleet Bridge, the whole street was crowded with people, which made that which followed seem very strange; for about eight at night we heard a din from below which came up the street, continually increasing, till we could perceive a motion, and that was a row of stout fellows, that came shouldered together, cross the street, from wall to wall, on each side. How the people melted away, I cannot tell, but it was plain those fellows made clear board, as if they had swept the street for what was to come after. They went along like a wave, and it was wonderful to see how the crowd made way. Behind this wave—which, as all the rest, had many lights attending—there was a vacancy, but it filled apace, till another like wave came up, and so four or five of these waves passed, one after another; and then we discerned more numerous lights, and throats were opened with hoarse and tremendous noise, and with that advanced a pageant, borne along above the heads of the crowd, and upon it sat a huge Pope *in pontific-*

alibus, in his chair, with a seasonable attendance for state; but his premier minister, that shared most of his car, was Il Signior Diavolo, a nimble little fellow, in a proper dress, that had a strange dexterity in climbing and winding about the chair, from one of the Pope's ears to the other.

"The next pageant was a parcel of Jesuits, and after that (for there was always a decent space between them) came another, with some ordinary persons with 'halters,' as I took it, about their necks, and one with a stenterophonic tube sounded 'Abhorrers! Abhorrers!' most infernally: and lastly, came one with a single person upon it, which some said was the pamphleteer, Sir Roger L'Estrange, some the King of France, some the Duke of York; but certainly it was a very complaisant, civil gentleman, like the former, that was doing what everybody pleased to have him, and, taking all in good part, went on his way to the fire."

Into this bonfire, near Temple Bar, the effigies were lowered and burned with much uproar, all except one, of Sir Edmundbury Godfrey, the magistrate before whom Oates had made a deposition, and whose body was found in a field behind Primrose Hill. It was evident that he had been murdered, though it was said at the time that some of the wounds had been inflicted after his death, and of course the murder was attributed to the Papists. The "Abhorrers" were those who had, in an address to the court, declared their abhorrence of the "Petitioners," who were constantly appealing to the King to grant

what they considered were their rights, in accordance with his promises at the Restoration.

The members of the Green Ribbon Club—a Whig society, of which Lord Shaftesbury was said to be the head—met at their headquarters, the King's Head, at the east corner of Chancery Lane, on this day.

The burning of the Pope at Temple Bar was continued as a more or less regular observance for many years, and only ceased in the reign of George I. The Bar itself was the structure with which most of us were familiar till its removal, when it was superseded by the hideous griffin which now rears its ungainly form at the City boundary.

The old Temple Bar—the house of timber and gateway described by Strype—had been taken down after the Fire of London, and in its place a structure of Portland stone, with a main gateway and two sideways for foot-passengers, was built in 1670, from the designs of Wren. On the west, or Strand side, the statues of Charles I. and Charles II., in Roman garb, stood in two niches. Originally the royal arms were sculptured over the keystone on this side. On the eastern side were the statues of James I., and either Queen Elizabeth or James's queen, Anne of Denmark, it is not quite certain which, though the popular notion was in favour of Queen Elizabeth, and on Pope-burning days the statue was adorned with a gilt wreath. A slab over the eastern arch bore the inscription, "Erected in the year 1670, Sir Samuel Starling, Mayor; continued in the year 1671, Sir Richard Ford, Lord Mayor; and finished in the year

1672, Sir George Waterman, Lord Mayor." The scrolls supporting the upper part of the structure, the fruit and flowers ornamenting the pediment, and the sculptured statues themselves were by no means imposing, and were the work of John Bushnell. Altogether there was a mean, dumpy look about the edifice, and perhaps no one would have much regretted its final disappearance, if it had not been replaced by a figure like nothing known to art or nature. The Bar had not even the sanction of antiquity, and had become an obstruction no longer to be endured in the vast and increasing traffic. The chief historical interest which it could claim, apart from the recollection of the famous wayfarers who had passed through its narrow side arches, was the gruesome remembrance of the heads and mutilated limbs of "traitors" which once surmounted the centre arch, fixed on iron spikes, and nodding and trembling as heavy vehicles rumbled beneath. These were the horrible accessories of the trophies with which Temple Bar was garnished when the Sovereign visited the City, and the Lord Mayor and sheriffs, with their officers, went through the ceremony of closing the gates and re-opening them for the Monarch, to whom the keys were presented and the Civic Sword of State was offered, to be returned, with the stale compliment that they could not be in better hands than those of the civic officials. The stone was still white, the carvings of scrolls and cornucopia still sharp and clear, when the first section of a mutilated body was placed there—that of Sir

Thomas Armstrong, Master of the Horse to Charles II., who was implicated in the real or pretended conspiracy of the Rye House Plot, and was dealt with by the infamous Jeffreys, who sentenced him, on a record of outlawry, without trial, to be hung at Tyburn. His head was placed in Westminster Hall, a quarter of the body was boiled in pitch and fixed above Temple Bar, the remainder was sent to Stafford, which Armstrong had represented in Parliament. Sir William Parkyns, a Jacobite gentleman, of Warwickshire, and Sir John Friend, a wealthy brewer, of Aldgate, were executed for conspiring to seize and murder William III. while he was out hunting between Brentford and Turnham Green. The head of Parkyns, and the mangled remains of Friend, were placed upon Temple Bar. Then followed the heads and limbs of other conspirators, and there were five heads on the Bar when the execution, for the rebellion of 1745, added those of Colonel Francis Townley, and a young man named George Fletcher, son of a widow, a shopkeeper at Salford. These were two of the nine rebels who were hanged on Kennington Common, one of whom was James Dawson (Jemmy Dawson), commemorated in Shenstone's pathetic ballad.

On the 12th of August, 1746, these last two heads were placed over the Bar. Three days afterwards the elegant and accomplished letter-writer and dilettante, Horace Walpole, was roaming in the City and "passed under the new heads on Temple Bar, where people make a trade of letting spy-glasses at a halfpenny a look."

It was in April, 1773, as recorded by Boswell, that Dr. Johnson, dining at Beauclerk's with Lord Charlemont, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other members of the literary club held in Gerrard Street, Soho, said, "I remember once being with Goldsmith in Westminster Abbey. While he surveyed the Poets' Corner, I said to him, '*Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis.*'* When we got to Temple Bar he stopped me, pointed to the heads upon it, and slily whispered me, "*Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur* ISTIS.'"

This was excellent—for both Johnson and Goldsmith were pretty strong Tories; in fact, Johnson was not far from being a Jacobite, until his interview with George III. and his Government pension for the dictionary, as well as his riper age and experience, considerably mitigated his political views.

The heads and limbs on Temple Bar hardened and blackened in the air and smoke till they became like stone excrescences of the structure, and at last nodded off from the spikes or were blown down by some high wind. The last to remain were those of Townley and Fletcher, and the last remaining of these two fell in 1772.

In 1790 Alderman Pickett, who built Pickett Place, on the western side of the Bar, near Butcher Row, and other tenements demolished for the improvements made before the erection of the present Law Courts, advocated the removal of Temple Bar; but it remained for nearly a century before it was finally condemned, after repeated and often violent discussion in the

* "It may be that our name shall mix with theirs."

Common Council; and middle-aged people still seem to miss the queer old arched gateway, and even the barber's shop which once stood huddled up to the passage-way of the Bar on the northern side, and was provided with doors by which customers might pass through, either on the east or west, and so find themselves, before or after being shaved, either in the shire or the City.

Among the constant haunters of the Highway of Letters for nearly half a century was Aubrey, the famous gossiping chronicler, who spent much of his time in Fleet Street collecting anecdotes, which are frequently so full of errors, or mere assumptions, that little reliance can be placed on them, though references and quotations, even from the least veracious, are often to be found in books professing to be authoritative. Aubrey was born in 1625, the year of the accession of Charles I., and lived till 1697, when William III. reigned alone after the death of Mary.

Sometimes he wandered in the country, where he visited friends and relations, and enjoyed what he called his "diet and sweet otiums;" but usually he sought "a happy delitescency" in town, sauntering in Fleet Street, lounging in the coffee-houses, attending meetings of the Royal Society. What a world of gossip was his!—born not long after Shakespeare's death, almost in touch with Ben Jonson, interviewing Izaak Walton, consorting with Evelyn, and visiting Will's coffee-house, and talking to Dryden about Milton, full of superstitious fancies of astrology, omens, tokens, and apparitions, which made him seek

Lilly and Vincent Wing. One of his sentences is worth quoting, in relation to the increase of books and printing:—"Before printing, old wives' tales were ingenious; and since printing came in fashion, till a little before the civil war, the ordinary sort of people were not taught to read. Now-a-days books are common, and most of the poor people understand letters; and the many good books and variety of turns of affairs have put all the old fables out of doors. And the divine art of printing and gunpowder have frighted away Robin Goodfellow and the fairies."

Aubrey's "Lives of Eminent Men" was written at the request of Anthony à Wood, the Oxford antiquary, and consisted first of semi-detached notes, or "minutes," which Wood had to put in order. The book was not printed till 1813, from the Ashmolean MSS.; but they had been frequently consulted by biographers, like Marlowe, who made considerable use of them. Like most gossipmongers' stories, Aubrey's particulars of the habits and origin of eminent men are too often on the malicious side of exaggeration, and almost as often appear to be mere idle inventions.

It does not appear that Aubrey had much to do with Childs' bank, though he must have seen the room over the gateway of the new Temple Bar, which the eminent bankers then or afterwards rented as a kind of muniment room, where they stored old account books, diaries, letters, and memorials, which told the financial history of the firm and contained

strange records of the private pecuniary affairs of royal and noble families.

Dryden had at least one transaction with the Fleet Street bankers at the Marygold, for with them he deposited £50, to be paid for the discovery of the ruffians employed by the profligate Lord Rochester to inflict on him a sound cudgelling, in revenge for some lines in an essay, or "satire," said to have been written by the poet in conjunction with Lord Mulgrave. Can we not imagine the famous Poet Laureate, dramatist, satirist, the dictator of the wits and men of letters at Will's Coffee-house, passing under the newly built archway, and calling here and there at the booksellers' in the highway of Fleet Street? A short, plump man, with a round, fresh-coloured, dimpled face, and a bright eye, but somewhat "down-looking"—that is the portrait Pope gave of him in his later days—not the kind of man to do much to defend himself against the cudgels of scoundrels hired to assault him, but a tough opponent with the pen, with which he could deal sledge-hammer strokes, or fine-drawn blows that would fetch blood.

He, too, like his friends Pepys and Evelyn, wrote of the plague and the fire; and Dryden probably saw Titus Oates, the instigator of the perjuries which led to the murderous execution of so many innocent persons, partly expiate his misdeeds by the dreadful punishment to which he was sentenced by the no less hardened villain, Judge Jeffreys, in the succeeding reign—part of the punishment being that he should periodically stand in the pillory here by the Temple.

It was Evelyn's pen which wrote the graphic account, with which we are familiar, of the scene at Whitehall, on the Sunday evening before the death of Charles II., and of the death-bed scene itself.

Much of the literature of that time, and the publications in Fleet Street, consisted in satires, pasquinades, plays, and pamphlets, and there was considerable licence, even in abuse and ridicule of the Court, especially when, as was often the case, the satirist exposed the foibles of persons in whom the King had shrewdly noticed peculiarities which provoked his scoffing wit, or designs to which he was opposed. Much was overlooked, so long as it did not smell of treason, though attempts had more than once been made to suppress coffee-houses, for political reasons.

Soon after the Restoration an Act had been passed forbidding the publication of unlicensed books, and, as we have noted, there were practically no newspapers except the *London Gazette*, the publication of news letters not including reports of proceedings of Parliament, political speeches, or much information relating to the movements of the Government. The art of printing in England was falling into a degraded condition, and though the publication of books increased and the Highway of Letters retained its characteristics, there was comparatively little demand for literature of the higher kind; and in a licentious Court, the depravity of which has seldom been surpassed, there was as little taste for the lighter elegant writings of a previous age. This may be attributed to

the declension of learning among the majority of ladies of the higher class, and a general want of female education, which left those of the middle class too ignorant to have even a desire to read. Of the scenes and people at the Court we may read more than enough in the pages of Grammont, of Pepys, and of the graver and more affectedly shocked Evelyn.

In Macaulay's History we read of the abuses and corruption of the officers of the Government, the absence of material and national progress, the condition of the county gentry and of the inferior clergy, the restricted area of the metropolis, when Islington, Chelsea, and Marylebone were villages or rural districts, and the only bridge across the Thames in London, "a single line of irregular arches, overhung by piles of mean and crazy houses, and furnished, after a fashion worthy of the naked barbarians of Dahomey, with scores of mouldering heads, impeded the navigation of the river."

This was in 1685, and yet the world of letters in London, as it was represented by Fleet Street and its neighbourhood in the City, was distinguished by eminent representatives, especially among the London clergy. Sherlock preached at the Temple, Tillotson at Lincoln's Inn, Wake and Jeremy Collier at Gray's Inn, Burnet at the Rolls Chapel in Chancery Lane, Stillingfleet at St. Paul's, Fowler at St. Giles', Cripplegate, and Beveridge at St. Peter's, Cornhill. To the writings of these men Dryden owned that he was chiefly indebted for his style and the force and character of much of his best work—that which was

still quoted and for which he was sought after and admired when the youth who was to succeed him at Will's Coffee-house sent an ode (the first which he had published) from Magdalen College, Oxford, inscribed, "To Mr. Dryden, by Mr. Jo. Addison," and dated June 2nd, 1693.

ORNAMENT FROM BURNET'S "HISTORY OF HIS OWN TIME" (1724).

PUBLISHER'S MARK FOR TITLE-PAGE OF SECOND PART OF "ROBINSON CRUSOE," 1719.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE "COFFEE-HOUSES."

Daniel Defoe—His Ups and Downs—Jonathan Swift—Gay's "Trivia"—Dunton the Publisher—Jacob Tonson—Bernard Lintot—The Court at Kensington—Will's Coffee-house—Steele and Addison—Button's Coffee-house—Pope and Voltaire—A Picturesque Age—Nando's Coffee-house—A Scurrilous Publisher—The Kit-Kat Club—Francis Atterbury and Joseph Butler.

THE chief representative of the world of letters in Fleet Street in the time of James II. was the famous Daniel Defoe, and he may be said to have touched almost every point in the circumference of literature of which that highway was the centre. He is remembered as a political essayist and pamphleteer, for he wrote hundreds of these publications, and suffered for his sturdy honesty in defending the principles of civil and religious liberty; but his fame as a graphic descriptive writer has been more enduring, while as an original story-teller or novelist

of concentrated power, he still holds a recognised place in the literature of the country. The power is none the less striking because it was held in reserve, under the control of his amazing faculty of invention, which, by its mastery of details, gave an air of probability, and even of fact, to works of imagination. Of these "Robinson Crusoe" is but one among many, though it is *the* one which has retained its popularity for nearly two centuries, and seems likely to maintain it still, though it has been long regarded rather as a book for boys than for adult readers, for whom it was first published, and who found delight in its religious reflections, as well as in its vivid descriptions, and in its romantic and apparently veracious narrative.

Daniel Defoe, the son of James Foe, a prosperous dissenting butcher in Cripplegate, was sent to a good school, kept by Charles Morton, a well-known scholar, and afterwards began his career as an agent in the hosiery trade, in Freeman's Court, Cornhill. But his footsteps were drawn towards Fleet Street, even in those early days, as is shown by his tract, "Presbytery Rough Drawn," published in 1683, before the death of Charles II.

On the accession of James, young Foe was on the side of those citizens who supported Monmouth, whom he followed to Sedgemoor. After the defeat there, he escaped to the Continent, visited Spain and Portugal, and came back with a "De" before his name, so that the author of three other pamphlets, in 1687, in the reign of James, was Daniel "De" Foe.

Though, when William III. came to the throne, Defoe was able to write without being persecuted and advocated many projects the advantages of which have only been fully recognised in later days, he had to retire to Bristol to avoid the proceedings of a creditor, who, with others to whom he owed money, was paid out of the earnings of the indefatigable writer. He then returned to London, and was employed for five years, till 1699, as accountant to the Commissioners of the Glass Duty.

The accession of Anne, and the persecution of dissenters, reduced him to poverty, but did not daunt him. So subtle was the satire of "The Shortest Way with Dissenters," that at first several of the more violent Tory Churchmen professed the utmost delight with it; while certain leading dissenters denounced it with unbated breath. When it was discovered that the essay was a keen satire written by a dissenter, the tables were turned, literally "with a vengeance," and the author again appeared in Fleet Street, but was taken thither from Newgate that he might be placed in the pillory, after having already been similarly exposed at the Royal Exchange and the Conduit in Cheapside. He was also fined 200 marks, and was sentenced to remain in prison till he found sureties for his good behaviour for seven years.

Harley, becoming Minister, induced the Queen to remit the fine and shorten the punishment, and subsequently Defoe was employed to go to Scotland to promote the Union; but he returned, not only to London, but to his former independent support of

principles which did not suit a Tory Government, and was again prosecuted and imprisoned. After writing a vindication of himself, he was compelled, by broken health, to retire from the field of political controversy, but he continued to write those fictions which have done most to place his name in the forefront of those who have been identified with the Highway of Letters. The story which made his lasting fame Dr. Johnson placed along with "Don Quixote" and the "Pilgrim's Progress," the only three books which the reader wished were longer.

The personal appearance of Defoe was well known, and he is described, in the proclamation which orders his arrest, as a middle-sized, spare man, of about forty, with dark complexion, dark-brown hair (but wearing a wig), hooked nose, sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth. Rather than the printer and the publisher should suffer, he surrendered, but his punishment became a sort of triumph. The pillory in Fleet Street, like those at the Exchange and Cheapside, was hung with garlands, for it was in July (the rose month) that he was brought out. He had written his "Hymn to the Pillory," which was printed and distributed. Crowds attended him, and drank his health with acclamations, as they read the lines:—

> "Tell them the men that placed him here
> Are scandals to the times;
> Are at a loss to find his guilt,
> And can't commit his crimes."

Even his opponents, the Tory pamphleteers, were

obliged to acknowledge that he was protected by his adherents from the insults of those who would have triumphed in seeing him pelted with garbage, instead of being adorned with roses. He went back to Newgate to prepare his *Review*, which began on the 19th of February, 1704, was at first published twice, and afterwards three times, a week, and lasted till May, 1713, a good deal longer than most, if not all, of its immediate successors, though they had the caustic satire and coarse power of Swift to maintain them.

Jonathan Swift himself is not to be omitted from the associations of Fleet Street, though he only appeared there during his visits to London from the parsonage house at Laracor, or afterwards from the deanery at Dublin. It was Benjamin Motte, who succeeded Ben Tooke at the shop at Middle Temple Gate, who published "Gulliver's Travels," for which he grudgingly paid £200; and we repeatedly hear of Dean Swift being in the neighbourhood, either dining at the Devil Tavern with some of his friends, or grumbling about a visit to the top of St. Paul's, and having to pay afterwards for a dinner, or speaking of the danger of falling into the hands of the "Mohocks," one of the gangs of ruffians who thought they proved themselves to be "brave boys" and men of fashion by sallying forth at night and attacking peaceable people, pricking unoffending citizens with their swords, drenching feeble wayfarers in the gutter, rolling women along the causeway in tubs, assaulting watchmen, and generally insulting and seriously

maltreating everybody too weak to withstand them. Some of these scoundrels would enter taverns or coffee-houses, where unarmed, peaceable tradesmen sat, and clear the rooms by their violence. These were called "Scourers;" others took different fancy names. They frequently paid a visit to the neighbourhood of Fleet Street, and to the West End of London, near Bury Street, St James's, where Swift, writing to Stella, in September, 1710, said he had the first floor, "a dining-room and bed-chamber, at eight shillings per week; plaguey deep, but I spend nothing for eating, never go to a tavern, and very seldom in a coach; yet, after all, it will be expensive." He probably contrived to "board" by visiting his friends or accepting invitations. It was said that Swift, by one of his strong and cynical remarks, suggested to Gay his *Beggar's Opera*, the drama which had its great scene in Newgate, and highwaymen, malefactors, and their companions for its characters, and was the subject of a fine print by Hogarth. Swift had said, "What an odd, pretty sort of thing a Newgate pastoral would make," and Gay at once caught the idea, and, not unaided by Swift's advice, produced the opera in the theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields, under the management of Rich. At first the performance was forbidden, but leave was afterwards granted, and the *Beggar's Opera* was the great attraction of the town, ran for the unprecedented number of sixty-two nights, and, as the joke went, "made Gay rich, and Rich gay."

Gay and Swift both wrote satirical poems about

London. Gay, in the "Trivia, or art of Walking in London," hits off with happy effect the aspect of the streets, the broken causeways, the overflowing gutters, the noisome condition of Fleet Ditch, the bad roads, the methods of robbery, and the various dangers and inconveniences to which wayfarers, in the Highway of Letters and its tributary streets, were then exposed. Swift, in his vigorous and unstudied way, also characterises the ditch, and in "The City Shower," and elsewhere, leaves his record of the locality; and so too did Pope, in lines that have already been quoted.

Swift, who was thirty-six years younger than Dryden, the latter having been born in 1631 and dying in 1700, was never really good friends with the old poet, and the cause of his animosity was said to be that Swift having sent a poem to the *Athenian Mercury*, a weekly periodical issued by a notorious publisher named Dunton, Dryden, on reading it, said to the Dean, "Cousin, you will never be a poet." This Swift never forgave so entirely as to treat Dryden with cordial friendship.

Dunton the publisher, an erratic individual, who repeatedly left his business to travel abroad and in America, left a strange autobiography, setting forth his "life and errors"; he died in 1735, in poverty, at the age of seventy-six. Pope had included him in the "Dunciad" as an abusive scribbler.

Dryden's first publisher, Henry Heringman, at the Blue Anchor, in the Lower Walk of the New Exchange—a kind of bazaar built by James I.—

having retired from business, the poet accepted the offers of Jacob Tonson, a clumsy, ill-favoured young man, who was looking after the main chance and striving to monopolise the publication of the works of some of the leading men of letters.

Tonson was not altogether illiberal in his payments, but he was not distinguished for delicacy and refinement, and used to harass Dryden by applying constantly for "copy," or manuscript for the printer. This has always been a source of discord between authors and some publishers, who regard the productions of the writer's thought and his facility or temporary difficulty of composition as of no account, but demand a book as they would order a coat or a pair of trousers from a tailor, in a manner at once peremptory and uncompromisingly mechanical.

Dryden, who was not easily ruffled, became at last so sensitive to the bullying iteration of Tonson, that on one occasion, when a friend had called on him, and a knock came at the door, he begged the visitor not to go, for *that* was Tonson, who, if he found him alone, would insult and irritate him beyond endurance. As the publisher also often paid in clipped silver and coins of light

ORNAMENT FROM "THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF ROBINSON CRUSOE," 1719.

weight, the bullying manner was adding insult to injury, and at length Dryden dipped his pen in the gall of which he always kept a stock for special occasions, and drew with vivid force the portrait of the unconscionable bookseller, who came

> "With leering looks, hell-faced and speckled fair,
> With two left legs and Judas-coloured hair,
> And frowzy pores that taint the ambient air."

Jacob didn't want any more of that, and became more civil.

"LEMUEL GULLIVER."
(*From the first edition, 1726.*)

Tonson's first shop was the Judge's Head, within two or three doors of Fleet Street, in Chancery Lane, and about 1697 he moved to a shop under the gate of Gray's Inn. He then took one in the Strand, over against Catherine Street, with the sign of the Shakespeare's Head.

The most successful publisher of that time was probably Bernard Lintot, whose shop was at No. 16, Fleet Street, between the two Temple gates. He paid Pope above £5,000 for his Homer, so that disparities between payments to authors were as marked in those days as they have been since. The shop occupied by Lintot was previously kept by Robinson

the bookseller, and it was there that Pope met Warburton and commenced the close friendship which lasted for so many years.

It should be remembered that after the accession of William III. fewer persons distinguished in arts and letters resided in or near Fleet Street. The Court was at Kensington, and the tendency had been to move westward towards Soho, Leicester Fields, and Piccadilly; but Fleet Street was still the Highway of Letters, even though printers, booksellers, and publishers were to be found beyond Temple Bar, and northward in Holborn, Cripplegate, and Clerkenwell. At a later date, when Anne was on the throne, Kensington Gardens became a fashionable resort, and so they continued after the ferment and turmoil of a threatened return of the Stuarts was ended, and the prompt action of the Whigs had placed George of Brunswick on the throne, to be succeeded by George the Second. It was in the latter reign, and under the influence of Caroline of Anspach, that the gardens at Kensington were in their glory, and the company to be seen there, on special occasions, included most of "the wits," nearly all the beaux, and the majority of the beauties in the metropolis.

Steele, who, after the accession of George I., was made Master of the Horse at Hampton Court, and received the honour of knighthood, besides being director of the Company of Comedians; and Swift, with his truculent Irish face, and clad in clerical wig and cassock, may be supposed to have mingled

with the company, while Pope may have made an occasional visit to receive the notice which his poetical reputation ensured for him, in spite of his small stature and deformed figure; but they were doubtless more familiar frequenters of the Highway of Letters, where Addison's regular-featured, self-complacent face, the jovial short visage and beaming eyes of Sir Richard, and the crooked figure of Pope were to be seen at the booksellers', or at the taverns and coffee-houses.

At Will's coffee-house, in Bow Street, Covent Garden, Addison succeeded Dryden as the acknowledged leader of the wits of his time; but Addison was probably less vivid than Dryden, and his style, as we may see, though dignified and pure, is, so to speak, lacking in colour, albeit in the "Spectator" he displays a charming humour and a sprightliness which, though inferior to the hearty, genial vivacity of Steele, reveals a delightful faculty of depicting character and introducing fictitious personages who become real to the reader, and are to this day spoken of, and their supposed opinions quoted, as though they had been living acquaintances of the "Spectator."

"Will's," or William Unwin's, coffee-house, of which we have had to speak before, was at the west corner of Russell Street, in Bow Street, Covent Garden. Bow Street was then as fashionable a resort as Bond Street afterwards became, and Will's coffee-house was, to all intents and purposes, a tavern, though the lower part was let to a woollen draper. It was not uncommon in those days for only the upper storeys

of a building to be occupied as a tavern. There was one in Chancery Lane, where Izaak Walton (it has been said) for some time rented the shop beneath. The wits assembled in the large room on the first floor at Will's, where they sat at small tables disposed about the room. Dryden's chair was in the corner near the fire, and in summer was taken into the balcony of the window, where aspirants to literary or fashionable fame were introduced to him and felt honoured by being allowed to take a pinch of snuff from his snuff-box. Tobacco was smoked pretty freely in the club-room, as at most other places of assembly, and wine, punch, and ale were consumed, as well as tea and coffee.

Here the critics met to discuss the merits or demerits of a new play, and the authors, including Dryden ("Mr. Bays," as he was called in one of the skits of the time), went to listen to them. A private room could be engaged for conversation over a dish of tea, for the crowd in the larger rooms was often considerable; many of those who composed it attending that they might say they had been there. Tom Brown, in his "Laconics," says:—"A wit and a beau set up with little or no expense. A pair of red stockings and a sword-knot sets up one, and peeping once a day in at Will's, and two or three second-hand sayings, the other." "The London Spy" (by Ned Ward) speaks of adjourning to the wits' coffee-house, going up-stairs and finding much company but little talk; shuffling through a moving crowd of philosophical mutes to the other end of the room, where three or four wits of the upper

class were rendevouz'd at a table, and were disturbing the ashes of the old poets by perverting their sense. At another table were seated a parcel of young, raw, second-rate beaus and wits, who were conceited if they had but the honour to dip a finger and thumb into Mr. Dryden's snuff-box." Defoe, in his "Journey through England," speaks of Will's coffee-house, where there was playing at picket and the best of conversation till midnight, and where blue and green ribbons and stars sat familiarly and talked with the same freedom as if they had left their qualities and degrees of distance at home. This was of course before the degeneration mentioned by Ned Ward.

Addison had written words of praise and encouragement of young Pope, and the little poet seems to have been introduced at Will's by a friend of Swift. He has left some memoranda relating to Addison, who, he says, "passed each day alike and much in the manner that Dryden did." Dryden employed his mornings in writing, dined *en famille*, and then went to Will's, only he came home early o' nights. Pope, neither by taste nor constitution, could bear much of this coffee-house life. The drinking and the late hours were too much for him, and, truth to tell, the placid, composed, highly moral Addison was about the equal of the jovial, impulsive, genial Steele, in the matter of potations. The ex-guardsman, dramatist, poet, essayist, probably had the character of a toper because of this joviality. He spoke of drinking whether he drank or not. Was it not from the Trumpet, in Shire Lane, that he sent word to his wife,

whom he dearly loved, that he would be with her "in a bottle and a half"? Addison, probably, seldom talked much about it, but drank the more. Steele was a careless, good-humoured, tender-hearted, open-handed man—and a good man, too—always on the side of morality and religion. Addison was intellectually great, but in many respects socially small, reserved, and often disingenuous and self-seeking. Perhaps the contact with Court and Government had somewhat damaged him. It seemed that it could not damage Steele, who cared little for political honours, though, in his way, he was a hearty politician.

Both, however, were good men and close friends. They had been at school together at the Charterhouse, and were within a few months of the same age. It is to be regretted that almost at the end of their literary career they should have quarrelled about some political question.

The references to Will's in the "Tatler" and the "Spectator" are numerous, but it is to be noted that though some of the poetical contributions were dated from Will's coffee-house, it was at the Trumpet, in Shire Lane, at the upper end, that "the Tatler" met his club, and that "Isaac Bickerstaff," the fictional representative of Steele, lived. The more learned or scientific papers in the "Tatler" were dated from the Grecian coffee-house, in Devereux Court, Strand, which may be said to have been contiguous to the Temple, and afterwards became the Grecian Chambers. The Grecian was a great resort of learned men, and we read of Dr. Sloane, the secretary of the Royal

Society, there, and of Thoresby meeting Sir Isaac Newton, with professors from Oxford, and others, at the Grecian, after conference of the Society in 1712. In the first number of the "Tatler" it was recorded that Will's had altered very much since the time that Dryden frequented it, and that instead of songs, epigrams, and satires, in the hands of the visitors there was a pack of cards; instead of cavils about the turn of the expression, the elegance of the style, and the like, the learned had disputes only about the game.

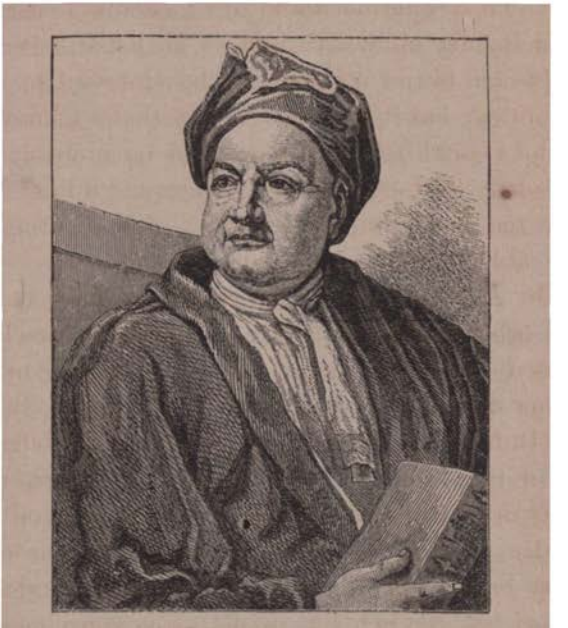
It was in 1710—the year in which the first number of the "Spectator" appeared—that Addison transferred himself to a coffee-house on the south side of Russell Street, opposite Will's, and kept by a servant of the Countess of Warwick. This man, whose name was Button, opened the house in 1712, and under the attractive patronage of the author of *Cato*, Button's coffee-house soon became a famous resort for the wits, and especially the literary Whigs, as Will's had been, and to some extent continued to be, for the Tories. It was said that when Addison was vexed by the countess, whom he was then courting, he would withdraw the customers from her former servant, Button; but this was probably a baseless Tory scandal —and scandal was a large element at the coffee-houses in those days. Addison's chief companions at Button's, before he married in 1716, were Steele, Budgell, Philips, Daventry, and Colonel Brett, with one of whom he would breakfast at his lodgings in St.

James's Place, dine at some tavern in Fleet Street, or elsewhere, then go to Button's, and stay for five or six hours, and perhaps go to some other tavern for supper; or he would dine at Button's, and stay far into the night. Pope could not stand this for above a year. He found it hurt his health, and so he left it. Perhaps he objected to the Whiggery, as he professed to be of no politics; but it is scarcely likely that a man of his physique could bear such a life, and he probably had discarded Button's before Ambrose Philips hung up a rod there, with the threat of castigating the satirical little poet if he caught him.

This story may have been another scandal, or may have originated in a threat, but it can scarcely be doubted that Pope was a wasp, as is shown by the manner in which he contrives to bring everybody into the "Dunciad," whether they had personally offended him or not. Colley Cibber, who was, perhaps, most hardly dealt with by Pope's persistent attacks on him —and, as he said, for no reason of which he was aware —may have given the true cause of his abandoning the society. "When you used to pass your hours at Button's you were, even there, remarkable for your satirical itch of provocation; scarce was there a gentleman of any pretension to wit whom your unguarded temper had not fallen upon in some biting epigram, among which you once caught a pastoral Tartar, whose resentment, that your punishment might be proportioned to the smart of your poetry, had stuck up a birchen rod in the room, to be ready whenever you might come within reach of it; and

at this rate you writ and rallied, and writ on, till you rhymed yourself quite out of the coffee-house."

This was in 1742. But, on the other side, Gay had written to Pope, in 1715, "I am confirmed that at



JACOB TONSON.

Button's your character is made very free with, as to morals, etc." It is certain that at one time Pope, in spite of the personal disadvantage which led Dennis, the critic, to call him a "hunchbacked toad," had the reputation of seeking intrigues, and his letters to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and others are full of artificial expressions of the kind which went for gallantry and devotion; but there is reason to believe that they

were artificial, and, as a matter of fact, we find the great little poet preserving some of them by using them afterwards as lines in his poems, for he was as penurious in his economy of phrases suitable for "copy" as he was of the paper on which he wrote.

It should not be forgotten that when Voltaire came to England, in 1726, he visited Pope, and dined at his table, where the conversation of the lively but by no means personally attractive Frenchman (he spoke English perfectly) was so exceedingly free that the respectable old lady, Pope's mother, left the room. She probably held to the more decorous manners and staid conversation of the superior class of City tradesmen, improved by mixing in intellectual society in her later days; for Pope's father was a silk mercer in Lombard Street, and a man of some consideration among his neighbours.

It may be that Pope introduced Voltaire to Fleet Street and the Middle Temple, of which Congreve was a member, though he lived in Surrey Street, where Voltaire, calling on him and referring to his works, was disgusted because the brilliant but artificial dramatist spoke of them as "trifles that were beneath him," and hinted that his visitor should seek his acquaintance "upon no other foot" (says Voltaire) "than upon that of a gentleman who led a life of plainness and simplicity. I answered that had he been so unfortunate as to be a mere gentleman, I should never have come to see him." An appropriate rebuke from the distinguished Frenchman, who had come to England to publish his "Henriade" by subscription.

Voltaire stayed in England for three years, and doubtless became acquainted with the fashionable society at Kensington Gardens, as well as with the "stationers" (booksellers' and publishers' shops) and the coffee-houses and taverns of Fleet Street, for Queen Caroline was helping to raise subscriptions for his book, and in his letters on England he wrote some polished verses in English upon Miss Lepell, one of the "beauties" who were made famous by the wits and poets of that time.

By-the-bye, in our imaginings of the aspect of Fleet Street during the periods of which we have been speaking, we should not leave out of consideration the gay colours, the variety, and sometimes the picturesque fashion of the costumes to be seen there—the broad-leafed hat and feathers, the lace ruffles, the silk or velvet coats and breeches, the bejewelled swords and ribbon-bowed sleeves of the gentlemen; the negligent drapery and brilliant-hued gowns and sacks, the hoods and feathered hats, the powder and patches of the ladies, who often wore "vizards," or half-masks, when they went for a jaunt, or sat at the theatre, where their blushes, perhaps, needed to be concealed, as the plays of Etherege and Wycherley, not to name lesser dramatists, were often marked by grossly indecent references, which were, unfortunately, not much diminished when actresses came upon the stage and superseded the young men who had previously played the characters of women. There must have been a wonderful movement of colour and varied fashion when the sedan chairs, or the glass coaches,

lingered till they could pass under Temple Bar, and gallant gentlemen coming from the booksellers' or the coffee-houses stood bowing to their acquaintances. Even down to the day when Goldsmith wore the peach-bloom-coloured coat made by Mr. Filby, the tailor, in Salisbury Court, and Beauclerk and Langton paused at the Middle Temple gate to exchange nods with acquaintances, as they went to call on Dr. Samuel Johnson, and the ladies wore vast hoops and towering head-dresses, the scene must have been one which we can scarcely realise, any more than we can altogether realise the strange shows that were so frequently to be seen between Temple Bar and Fleet Ditch, during the time between the accession of Queen Anne and that of George III.

They were vulgar shows for the most part, and not such as would attract much attention, even at a country fair, nowadays—monstrosities, dwarfs, giants (one of whom, dying, was buried in St. Dunstan's Churchyard), bearded women, performing animals, posture masters (who would entirely dislocate their limbs for the entertainment of visitors), fire-eaters, an elephant, a frowsy dromedary and her young one (from Tartary); and, among the better sort, a moving picture or panorama, a model of Amsterdam, and some ingenious but poor mechanical contrivances, such as would now be gratuitously displayed in shop windows.

As all the houses where these were exhibited, and most of the other buildings, were still distinguished

by painted signs, mostly swinging on ornamental iron brackets or stanchions from the house fronts, the general aspect was cheerful and picturesque from its remarkable irregularity, though the signboards sometimes were so heavy that one would occasionally be blown down, or break from its supports, and endanger the lives of the wayfarers. As there were no properly paved footways, and only a few timber posts to guard pedestrians from the wheels of coaches and waggons, the mud was cast in showers from the gutters upon the unfortunate people who were not on the side to "take the wall," while in wet weather the streams from defective spouts or high-pitched roofs added to the quagmires which only the wary walker could escape.

Pope, Swift, Gay, and others have left graphic pictures of these aspects of the Highway of Letters and its neighbourhood, and the "Tatler" and the "Spectator" present quaint and humorous allusions to them, and to the shops and taverns, from that of the inventor of the amalgamated metals, called after him, "Pinchbeck," to Charles Mather's, which is called in the "Tatler" "Bubbleboys," the toyman, who, being accused by Sir Timothy Shallow of selling him a cane "for ten pieces, while Tom Empty had as good a one for five," exclaims, "Lord! Sir Timothy, I am concerned that you, whom I took to understand canes better than anybody in town, should be so overseen. Why, Sir Timothy, yours is a true 'jambee,' and Esquire Empty's only a plain 'dragon.'"

One of the most famous coffee-houses was Nando's,

at the east corner of Middle Temple Lane, next to Lintot's, and here Thurlow, who was called to the Bar in 1754, used to resort. It was said that by his evident ability in a conversation which took place there, he obtained from a stranger a retainer as junior counsel in a famous case, which was the beginning of the career by which he was afterwards so distinguished as Lord Chancellor.

Peele's Tavern, at the corner of Fetter Lane, was on the same spot in 1722, and at a much later date included a newspaper room, where the principal newspapers were filed—but this was before the days of penny daily papers.

At the Black Boy, in Fleet Street, Arthur Collier published the first edition of "The Peerage," in 1709; and against St. Dunstan's Church was the Homer's Head, where Lawton Gilliver, stationer, did business. Close by, and nearly opposite to the Cross Keys (the sign of Bernard Lintot, Pope's publisher), was the Dial and Bible—also against St. Dunstan's Church—where the infamous Edward Curll published scurrilous books and pamphlets, some of them containing real or pretended private correspondence, which, if genuine, had been dishonestly obtained.

It was against Curll, who was the predecessor of some others who have gained notoriety by defamation and the diffusion of obscene and scandalous stories and reports, that Pope directed some of his bitterest denunciations, for he had been the victim of this dastardly dealer in alleged secret correspondence. In 1716 Curll had obtained from some unknown

source several manuscripts entitled "Court Poems," attributed to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and published them as having been written by Pope. For this Pope had his revenge by publishing an account in a satirical pamphlet of the poisoning of Curll and his recovery by the administration of a "vomit."

But the rascally publisher was incorrigible in his liking for slander and base imputation, and contrived, in 1726, to get hold of some of Pope's letters to his friend Cromwell, which were, it is believed, sent to the unscrupulous printer by Mrs. Thomas, Cromwell's mistress—spoken of as "Corinna"—who was for some time in prison for debt in the Fleet. Curll, a shambling, ill-conditioned, hang-dog-looking fellow, did not always go unscathed, and on one occasion, visiting Westminster School to make some inquiries about one of the masters or some person in authority, the boys in the playground caught sight of him, and, recognising his ungainly figure, proceeded to inflict condign punishment by hustling him, while some of them fetched a blanket, in which he was tossed till his limbs were half dislocated, when he was suffered to escape in a sorry plight.

Jacob Tonson, notwithstanding his coarse familiarity and brutal bluntness, and though he occasionally endeavoured to obtain high-class work for low-class pay, and doled out clipped and battered coins to men who submitted to his extortions, was of a different order, and attained sufficient honour and distinction to rank as the associate, as well as the

publisher, of men far above him in education and social position. He was bold enough to become the representative of publishing enterprise in a time when the business of the stationer and printer was emerging from some former disabilities, and when a reading public had been formed and was growing with remarkable rapidity.

Probably the occasion on which Tonson badgered Dryden beyond endurance was when the poet, who was then a Tory and a Jacobite, refused to dedicate his translation of Virgil to William III., by whose accession he had lost the Laureateship. Tonson, who was a violent Whig, was, therefore, reduced to the alternative of insinuating a compliment to his Majesty by causing the engraver to lengthen the nose of Æneas in the illustrations, that it might bear some resemblance to the most prominent feature of the royal countenance.

His association as a publisher with eminent Whig writers, like Steele, Addison, and other *habitués* of the Highway of Letters, enabled Tonson, who had accumulated a considerable fortune, to become the secretary of the famous Kit-Kat Club, which was held in Shire Lane, at a pastrycook's shop, or a tavern, kept by one Christopher Katt, noted, it is said, for the composition of savoury mutton pies. The conjunction of these dainties with the name of their vendor is somewhat suggestive to a more modern imagination, and some chronicler has endeavoured to pile up the agony by placing on record that the sign of the tavern was the "Cat and

Fiddle"—a corruption, be it remembered, of "Caton Fidèle," "the faithful Caton," referring to the loyal governor of Calais; but this additional association with the name of the club is rather beyond probability.

FRONTISPIECE TO "THE RAPE OF THE LOCK." (*From the edition of 1714.*)

The club or society consisted, on an average, of thirty-nine distinguished noblemen and gentlemen zealously attached to the Protestant succession of the House of Hanover. The famous mutton pies always formed part of the fare. The walls of the club-room were hung with portraits of the members, painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller, who was himself a member, and who, it has been said, painted them at the wheedling instigation of Tonson, who knew how to use coarse flattery to one so greedy of it as the fashionable artist. These portraits were of that three-quarter size which thereafter took the name of "Kit-Kat," and they appear to have been so designed to suit the dimensions of a room which Tonson built for the reception of the club at his house at Barn Elms, where the summer meetings were ultimately held instead of at "The Flask," on Hampstead Heath.

Foremost among the literary members were Steele and Addison. The Duke of Marlborough, the Earl of Dorset (a poet), Lord Stanhope, the Earl of Essex, Lord Halifax, Sir Robert Walpole, Garth (the poet-physician), Vanbrugh (the writer of comedies), Mainwaring, Pulteney, and Pierpoint, Duke of Kingston, were members. Every year the club observed the custom of electing some "beauty" of society as a "toast," and the gallant gentlemen engraved couplets or verses on their wine-glasses in her honour. The Duke of Kingston one evening proposed his little daughter, Lady Mary, and sent a chaise to fetch the beautiful child, who was toasted and elected by acclamation, and petted enough to turn her head. When the little lady grew to be a famous woman, and became Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, she used to refer with effusive delight to the recollection of that wonderful evening at the Kit-Kat Club

In the later days of the society the infamous scoundrel and duellist, Lord Mohun, who murdered Mountford the actor, and killed and was killed by the Duke of Hamilton in a duel in Hyde Park, became a member. Old Jacob Tonson considered that this was of sinister augury, especially when, in a fit of temper, aggravated by drink, Mohun broke the gilded emblem from the top of a chair. "The man who would do that," said the blunt old bookseller to a friend, "would cut a man's throat." Not long afterwards the club faded out. The preparations for the last ceremony of burning the Pope at

Temple Bar were forbidden because it was asserted that they had been instigated by the members of the Club.

Pope, who wrote some account of the Kit-Kat in a letter to Spence, became, as we have seen, a great friend of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and she good-humouredly tolerated the assumed gallantry of his letters; but they quarrelled because he could not, or would not, refrain from treating her to some of his pungent satirical comments. By that time, however, he had become a person of such distinction that he was received even in public places with no little deference. At a still later date we find Sir Joshua Reynolds writing about his first seeing Pope, and the admirable word-picture by which he describes him is eminently indicative of the great portrait painter.

Reynolds was then a young apprentice with Hudson, the portrait painter, who entrusted him to attend a picture sale to make a purchase. While he was there he heard the name of Pope whispered by the people about him, and presently the visitors in the room made way, and Pope himself entered, bowing from side to side and shaking hands with several who were near enough, among whom was young Reynolds, who put out his hand under the arm of the person in front of him. He described Pope as "about five feet six inches high; very humpbacked and deformed. He wore a black cloak, and, according to the fashion of that time, had on a little sword. He had a large and very fine eye, and a long handsome nose; his mouth had those peculiar marks which are always

found in the mouths of crooked persons, and the muscles which run across the cheek were so strongly marked that they seemed like small cords."

The description agrees wonderfully with the appearance of the bust by Roubiliac, which became the property of the late Mr. John Murray. This was about 1741, and not long before Pope's death. The Kit-Kat Club had been played out, and Button's also declined at the death of Addison in 1719, and the retirement of Steele to his country house, where he also died in 1729.

Pope survived them both—living till 1744—and Swift lived one year longer, but had become utterly broken down two or three years before, and died insane, as he had predicted that he would. When pointing to a tree withered at the upper branches, he said, "I shall be like that tree; I shall die from the top."

The brilliant, learned, and eloquent Francis Atterbury, who had been chaplain to William and Mary, lecturer at St. Bride's, and preacher at Bridewell Chapel in the reign of Anne, had become Dean of Westminster and Bishop of Rochester, and in 1723 left the kingdom—banished for life for having joined a plot to bring in the Pretender. He died in Paris in 1732.

The learned Joseph Butler, author of that still famous and unrivalled treatise, the "Analogy," had been preacher at the Rolls Chapel from 1718 to 1722, before he was appointed to a country rectory, where he remained quietly performing all his duties,

and continuing his profound studies, till a friend speaking of him to Caroline, Queen of George II., her Majesty exclaimed, "My God! I thought he had been dead."

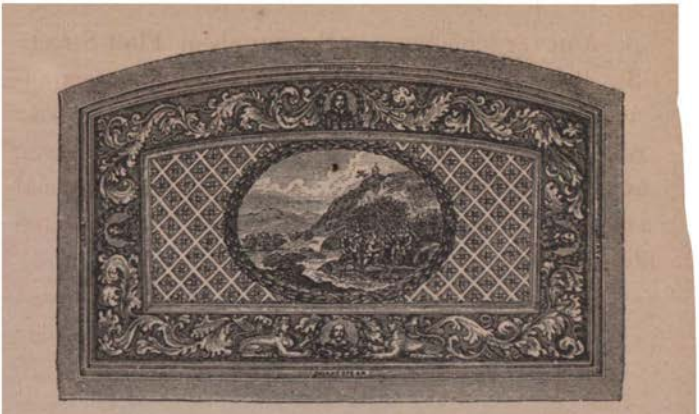
"No, madam, but he is buried," was the answer.

FROM THE TITLE-PAGE TO POPE'S WORKS (1717).

The great talents of the eminent and estimable divine had brought him fame, but neither fortune nor much preferment, till the Queen's patronage, thus bespoken, set him in the path which led to the bishopric of Durham.

When Horace Walpole was writing his trivial, but amusing and acute, correspondence, Pope may be said to have been the last surviving link of the society of the Highway of Letters which was associated with the club in Shire Lane.

A newer school was gathering about Fleet Street, St. Bride's, and the Temple, and those letters of Walpole, and the trifling episodes with which he was concerned, are of more importance than he ever expected they would be, in depicting the superficial aspects of the period, its manners, fashions, and absurdities.



PAINTED CEILING OVER THE PIT OF GOODMAN'S FIELDS THEATRE, IN WHICH GARRICK FIRST ACTED IN LONDON, OCT. 19TH, 1741.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Johnson in the Highway of Letters—Dryden, Swinney, and Cibber at Will's—Boswell—Pope and Johnson's Poem—The Friends who sought Johnson's Company—Johnson's Marriage—Lucy Porter—Portrait of Mrs. Johnson by Garrick—The Adelphi—The Literary Club—Fanny Burney—Johnson and Garrick—Johnson's Portrait by Reynolds—Hogarth—Richardson—Mrs. Thrale—Her Anecdotes of Johnson—Her Marriage with Piozzi—Oliver Goldsmith in Green Arbour Court and Wine Office Court—Meetings at the "Old Cheshire Cheese"—Miss Reynolds—The Ugliest Man—Reynolds' Fees for Portraits—The "Retaliation"—"The Vicar of Wakefield"—Mr. Newbery the Publisher—Richardson at Home—Mrs. Barbauld—Sir John Hawkins—John Wilkes and the *North Briton* in Fleet Street—Meeting of Wilkes and Johnson—The St. Dunstan's Club.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (it has already been impossible to keep that commanding name out of a record of

Fleet Street, and of those who have walked and wrought therein), Samuel Johnson, when he had become Doctor Johnson and the centre of that famous circle which has ever since been so closely identified with the Highway of Letters, used to say, "When I was a young fellow I wanted to write the Life of Dryden, and in order to get materials I applied to the only two persons then alive who had seen him; these were old Swinney and old Cibber. Swinney's information was no more than this—'That at Will's Coffee-house Dryden had a particular chair for himself, which was set by the fire in winter and was then called his winter chair; and that it was carried out for him to the balcony in summer and was then called his summer chair.' Cibber could tell no more but that he remembered him 'a decent old man, arbiter of critical disputes at Will's.'"

This is very suggestive of a wish that other men besides Johnson could have had a Boswell—following them like a shadow, marking down every particular of their habits and conversation, and yet not only tolerated but often encouraged, occasionally praised, sometimes even thanked for their company and their efforts to ingratiate themselves, without any reward but the satisfaction of genuine reverence, and a sense of moral and intellectual improvement by listening to the conversations of a learned and good man, with an extraordinary faculty of delivering an opinion on any and every subject.

It is pleasant to remember that Pope, who still was supreme in the poetical world in 1738, when

Johnson was twenty-nine years old, was evidently struck with the merits of the poem on "London," and inquired who was the author. On being informed that his name was Johnson and that he was some obscure man, Pope replied, "He will soon be *déterré*."

It is possible that the eye of the acute and successful poet may have caught the famous lines—

> "This mournful truth is everywhere confess'd—
> Slow rises worth, by poverty depressed;"

which, even in a later day, Johnson would repeat with solemn and impressive emphasis. At any rate, Pope seems not only to have made further inquiry about him, but perhaps to have seen him, though without his knowledge, and certainly to have tried to help him to obtain an appointment, for which he at that time applied, as master of a public school in Shropshire. The following note was sent by Pope to the friend before referred to (a son of a painter named Richardson), along with a copy of Johnson's Imitation of Juvenal—

"This is imitated by one Johnson, who put in for a public school in Shropshire, but was disappointed. He has an infirmity of the convulsive kind, that attacks him sometimes so as to make Him a sad spectacle. Mr. P. from the Merit of This Work, which was all the knowledge he had of him, endeavoured to serve him without his own application; and wrote to my Ld. Gore, but he did not succeed. Mr. Johnson published afterwards another poem in Latin with notes, the whole very humerous, call'd the 'Norfolk Prophecy.'—P."

This note was written on a slip of paper no larger

than a common message card, for "Paper-sparing Pope," as Swift called him, was so thrifty in this matter that parts of some of his important works were written on the fly-leaves or envelopes of old letters and other scraps of paper.

To speak of Doctor Samuel Johnson is indirectly to speak of Fleet Street—the Highway of Letters, of which for thirty-eight years he was the resident and conspicuous representative, amidst a circle of eminent men, who, though of strangely various pursuits and abilities, have ever since been associated in our memory with the clubs and coteries of which Johnson was the sponsor or the attracting centre.

Goldsmith, Burke, Reynolds, Garrick, Burney, Bennet Langton—the young gentleman from Oxford who had come to London to seek an interview with the author of the "Rambler," and remained his firm friend—the gay and somewhat profligate Beauclerk, whom the sage forgave much, because of his respect for good principles, his fascinating manners and excellent temper; Dr. Hawksworth; Hawkins, of whom Boswell was so jealous, and a number of others, among whom may be included Hogarth, Richardson, and, at a later date, Wilkes, were all impressed by that imposing personality, the powerful practical intellect and the prodigious range of information, which gave the doctor the foremost place in any society where his opinions were sought or expressed.

How familiar we seem to be with his companions in the Highway of Letters! They have been intro-

duced to us in their habit as they lived, and we know them in their social relations with Johnson, through the careful record of the faithful and irrepressible Boswell. To his record what can be added? It is the assiduously chronicled familiar life of the man whose footsteps sounded in Fleet Street for nearly half a century, and seem to echo there to this day.

We are acquainted with the aspect and the character of Samuel Johnson, even at the time that he came from Lichfield to London; we know of his early struggles, his precocious childhood; of his marriage (in 1734), when he was twenty-seven years old, with Mrs. Porter, a widow of forty-eight; of his affection for and correspondence with Lucy Porter, his step-daughter, long after the death of her mother in 1752, Lucy having remained in Lichfield with friends of the family, when her mother lived in London. We see the huge, loose-limbed, gaunt young man, with the strong face, marked and scarred by the scrofula from which he had suffered in childhood; the straight, stiff hair; the nervous disorder which caused his strange contortions, starts and gesticulations, and was mistaken for paralysis or "St. Vitus' Dance"; we laugh at the account he himself gave to Topham Beauclerk of "the love marriage on both sides," as he, no doubt, truly called it, in spite of the disparity of age. We remember the evidences of his deep attachment and his profound grief at the death of his wife; and we are almost angry at the florid, and by no means flattering, portrait of her which has been preserved in the pages of Boswell, who says:—

"... Mrs. Johnson, whom he used to name by the familiar appellation of 'Tetty' or 'Tetsey,' which, like 'Betty' or 'Betsey' is provincially used as a contraction for Elizabeth, her Christian name, but which to us seems ludicrous, when applied to a woman of her age and appearance. Mr. Garrick described her to me as very fat, with a bosom of more than ordinary protuberance, with swelled cheeks, of a florid red, produced by thick painting, and increased by the liberal use of cordials, flaring and fantastic in her dress, and affected both in her speech and her general behaviour. I have seen Garrick exhibit her, by his exquisite talent of mimicry, so as to excite the heartiest bursts of laughter; but he, probably, as is the case in all such representations, considerably aggravated the picture."

This mimicry on the part of Garrick was probably a revival of the ridicule in which schoolboys will indulge at the expense of their masters, and there appears to have been a good deal of it at the "Academy" opened by Samuel Johnson at Ediall, near Lichfield, though there were but three boys there to board and learn Latin and Greek, one of whom was David Garrick, who, when Johnson closed his school and came to try his fortune in London, was consigned to his care, to be placed with the Rev. Mr. Colson.

Johnson was eight and twenty, and we know he took a lodging in a garret at a staymaker's in Exeter Street, and dined at the Pine Apple in New Street for eightpence, including the penny which he gave the waiter, though other guests gave nothing.

Next we see him going to fetch his wife, perhaps with the hope that his tragedy of *Irene* would be accepted; and we are told of his going with Mr. Peter Garrick to the Fountain tavern to read the play, with a view to offering it to Mr. Fleetwood, the patentee of Drury Lane Theatre; but the tragedy had no exalted patron's name to float it and it was declined, nor was

it produced till twelve years afterwards, when David himself had become celebrated as the greatest actor of the age, and was manager of that theatre, where it appeared in 1749.

Before David Garrick's great success on the stage, he and his brother Peter—a sedate and quiet man—were engaged in business as wine merchants in Durham Yard. It was on this site and that of the "new Exchange" which stood there in the time of James I., that the brothers Adam afterwards built the Adelphi, about 1772. Garrick lived there in No. 5 the centre house of the terrace, till his death in 1779. It would appear that he then had ceased to go to the taverns in the neighbourhood of Fleet Street, or the Clubs that were held in them, for he wrote to the brothers Robert and John Adam, on behalf of Becket, a bookseller in the Strand, who wanted to remove to the house at the corner of Adam Street—"If you can make us all happy by suiting all our conveniences we shall make this shop, as old Jacob Tonson's was formerly, the rendezvous of the first people of England. I have a little selfishness in this request—I never go to coffee-houses, seldom to taverns, and should constantly (if this scheme takes place) be at Becket's, at one at noon and six at night."

The Club in Gerrard Street, Soho, founded by Johnson and Reynolds in 1764, still had superior attractions. It was first held at the Turk's Head in Greek Street, and was removed to a house with the same sign in Gerrard Street. At the death of Garrick it was called "The Literary Club," and the last

member elected in Johnson's lifetime was Dr. Burney, the father of Fanny Burney, the authoress of "Evelina," with whom the Doctor was so fascinated when he first made her acquaintance at the Thrales', that he resented Boswell's jealous endeavour to thrust himself between them and divert the conversation.

It was in reference to Garrick's death that Johnson said it was an event which had "eclipsed the gaiety of nations," a rather exaggerated declaration, which he afterwards defended when Boswell and others spoke of it as an extreme statement. They remembered, of course, how frequently the Doctor had spoken disparagingly of the actor's art, as a claim to high consideration for the actor himself, and of the ridicule which he had cast upon some of Garrick's verse. But they probably did not quite understand the real tenderness which existed between the former master and the former pupil, though we learn from Boswell that little David would, as it were, flutter about the great burly Doctor, pat the lappels of his coat, and seem to appropriate him by such silent tokens; while the Doctor would beam upon him with those purblind eyes, of which one was nearly useless, though he was a singularly close, comprehensive, and accurate observer when he was not in one of his frequent fits of abstraction.

It has been well said that Johnson regarded Garrick as being, in a sense, his property, and would say anything he chose of or to him, but would never suffer others to disparage him without keenly contradicting them. The fact was that while Johnson

admired the actor's graceful and brilliant conversation, his wit and repartee, he thought little of his literary ability, and did not rank dramatic representation, or the simulation of character on the stage, among the highest attainments.

Of course Johnson's characteristic emphasis of statement must be taken into consideration, but his occasional apparent perversity may be explained by his listeners being mostly ready to take everything he said seriously, and to make too little allowance for the keen enjoyment of banter and burlesque which was one of his characteristics.

Boswell seems to have been always in a "fantigue" about Johnson's displeasure, and yet to have been frequently "trying it on" with him by raising questions, repeating conversations, or making remarks which were likely to irritate him. More than that, he appears to have missed the humour of some of the Doctor's remarks, and interpreted them by the grave expression with which they were enunciated Yet the humour sometimes had a touch of asperity. Boswell says :—

"When Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted his portrait, looking into the slit of his pen, and holding it almost close to his eye, as was his general custom, he felt displeased, and told me 'he would not be known by posterity for his *defects* only, let Sir Joshua do his worst.' I said in reply that Reynolds had no such difficulties about himself, and that he might observe the picture which hung up in the room where we were talking, representing Sir Joshua holding his ear in his hand to catch the sound. 'He may paint himself as deaf if he chooses (replied Johnson), but I will not be *blinking Sam.*'"

That could scarcely have been said in actual ill-

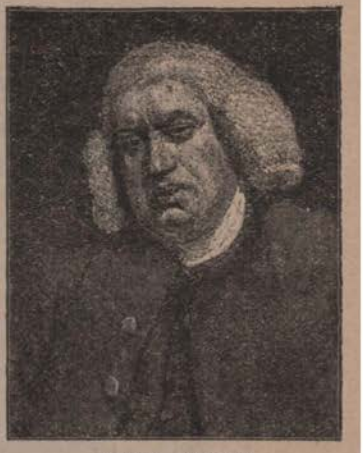
humour. We read these captious remarks in his most minute biography, and picture to ourselves the rugged face, the burly form, the rolling gait, the twitching, the gesticulation, and the talking to himself; and, on the other hand, the periods of silence suddenly broken by an outburst of conversation, often characterised by a sonorous melody of tone, nearly always by a choice of words which expressed with marvellous and comprehensive exactitude the meaning intended to be conveyed. Divesting ourselves of preconceived false notions that Johnson was bombastic or constantly bullying or offensive—and remembering with what delight men of considerable culture and high attainments sought his society and listened to his varied and illustrative conversation—we cannot read the records of his sayings without being astonished at the depth of his perception, the extent of his learning, and his remarkable estimate of the practical philosophy of life.

His mind had not been strongly applied to metaphysical studies, and his judgment, sound and powerful as it was, had always been somewhat perverted by gloomy apprehensions, which a wider and more spiritual acceptance of the doctrines of Christianity might have corrected, and a less constant estimate of personal demerit in relation to a future state might have mitigated.

This melancholy tendency was doubtless accentuated, even if it had not been caused, by those physical conditions of the nervous system which in a weaker mind would have led to serious delusions, and were

the occasion of grotesque habits—such as walking with irregular steps, falling into what seemed to be paralytic contortions, touching the tops of the posts in the streets when he went out alone, and so on.

These tendencies drove him to find forgetfulness of himself in society and to be grateful to those who would call on him, as they were glad enough to do, and listen to his abundant and unfailing comments on topics the discussion of which restored his cheerfulness. His first liking for Boswell grew into an affection, which no bickering could seriously diminish, for the man who continued to the last his faithful and admiring friend.



SAMUEL JOHNSON.

(*From the Portrait by Reynolds in the "Lives of the Poets,"* 1781.)

The effect that his strange contortions had upon Hogarth, at their first meeting at the house of Richardson, in Salisbury Court, was singularly suggestive. It was soon after the execution of Dr. Cameron, for having taken arms for the house of Stuart in 1745–6; and being a warm partisan of George the Second, Hogarth observed to Richardson, that certainly there must have been some very unfavourable circumstances lately discovered in this

particular case, which had induced the King to approve of an execution for rebellion so long after the time when it was committed, as this had the appearance of putting a man to death in cold blood, and was very unlike his Majesty's usual clemency. While he was talking, he perceived a person standing at a window in the room, shaking his head, and rolling himself about in a strange, ridiculous manner. He concluded that he was an idiot, whom his relations had put under the care of Mr. Richardson, as a very good man. To his great surprise, however, this figure stalked forwards to where he and Mr. Richardson were sitting, and all at once took up the argument, and burst out into an invective against George the Second, as one who, upon all occasions, was unrelenting and barbarous; mentioning many instances; particularly, that when an officer of high rank had been acquitted by a court-martial, George the Second had, with his own hand, struck his name off the list. In short, he displayed such a power of eloquence that Hogarth looked at him with astonishment, and actually imagined that this idiot had been at the moment inspired. Neither Hogarth nor Johnson was made known to the other at this interview.

Hogarth was eminently associated with the Highway of Letters, and his pictures have been as powerful and striking delineations of the morals and manners of the time as the novels of Fielding and Smollett, and have proved to be more permanently interesting, not only as unsurpassed works of art, but as improving

moral lessons. He was born in Ship Court, Old Bailey. His father kept a school, and he was baptised at the Church of St. Bartholomew the Great, East Smithfield. Of the estimate Hogarth formed of the strange man whom he had met at Mr. Richardson's, we may take the testimony of Mrs. Thrale, who, with her husband, afterwards became so close a friend of Johnson that he lived, frequently for many days together, at their house at Streatham, or at that adjoining the famous brewery in Southwark. In her anecdotes of Johnson she says:—

"Mr. Hogarth, among the variety of kindnesses shewn to me when I was too young to have a proper sense of them, was used to be very earnest that I should obtain the acquaintance, and if possible the friendship, of Dr. Johnson; whose conversation was, to the talk of other men, like Titian's painting compared to Hudson's, he said; 'but don't you tell people, now, that I say so (continued he), for the connoisseurs and I are at war, you know; and, because I hate *them*, they think I hate *Titian*—and let them!' Many were, indeed, the lectures I used to have in my very early days from dear Mr. Hogarth, whose regard for my father induced him, perhaps, to take notice of his little girl, and give her some odd, particular directions about dress, dancing, and many other matters, interesting now only because they were his. As he made all his talents, however, subservient to the great purposes of morality and the earnest desire he had to mend mankind, his discourse commonly ended in an ethical dissertation, and serious charge to me never to forget his picture of the 'Lady's Last Stake.' Of Dr. Johnson, when my father and he were talking together about him one day: 'That man' (says Hogarth) 'is not contented with believing the Bible, but he fairly resolves, I think, to believe nothing *but* the Bible. Johnson,' added he, 'though so wise a fellow, is more like King David than King Solomon; for he says in his haste that all men are liars.'"

Mrs. Thrale, it need scarcely be said, incurred the jealousy of Boswell—though he was invited to her house in Johnson's company—and the accuracy and

the veracity of this lady's anecdotes are sometimes called in question, not only by Boswell but by Baretti, the teacher of Italian introduced to the family by Dr. Johnson himself. Mrs. Thrale, who had been Miss Hester Lynch Salisbury, and was a lively lady of considerable talent, was left fatherless when still a young girl, and had, it would seem, married Thrale, the brewer, for his position. He appears to have been a man like an inferior kind of Dombey in manner with some education, and a considerable appreciation of Johnson's learning, conversation, and integrity, but an equal appreciation of "the pleasures of the table" in a dull sort of way. Mrs. Thrale was a plump, bright-eyed, impetuous little woman with a marvellous faculty for literary chatter and some facility in making verses, or "imitating" the classic poets.

At Boswell's lodgings in Old Bond Street, he and Sir Joshua Reynolds, Garrick, Goldsmith, Murphy, Bickerstaff, and Thomas Davies, who had first introduced Boswell to Johnson, met to dine. One of the party who had been invited had not arrived at the appointed time, and Boswell proposed to order dinner to be served, asking, "Ought six people to be kept waiting for one?" "Why, yes," answered Johnson (with a delicate humanity, as Boswell calls it), "if the one will suffer more by your sitting down than the six will do by waiting."

This was the occasion when Goldsmith strutted about, drawing attention to his peach-coloured coat, made by Mr. Filby, the tailor, in Water Lane,

The mere mention of Oliver Goldsmith opens up one of the most delightful associations of the Highway of Letters, though he, the poor, generous, unsuspicious, simple genius, could have had little happiness or comfort there, except in the society of those friends who, like himself, were attracted and held together by the magnetism of Johnson's strong individuality. The memory of the author of "The Deserted Village," "The Vicar of Wakefield," "The Good-natured Man," and "She Stoops to Conquer," is still fresh in the regards of the public, now that these pure and charming works have been before us for a hundred and thirty years, during which time his plays have not vanished from the stage, nor his exquisite stories, his entertaining essays, his affecting poems, from the companionable books which cheer and solace our leisure hours.

Goldsmith, the son of an Irish clergyman, a bachelor of Trinity College, a student in Edinburgh and at Leyden, a wanderer on foot over Europe, a bachelor of physic at Louvain, returned to England almost penniless, became an usher at a school at Peckham, a shopman (so it is recorded) to a chemist, and failing in an endeavour to pass his examination in surgery at Bartholomew's Hospital, with a view of serving at sea, was for some time a reader for the Press to Richardson, and an occasional writer for periodicals. During the time that he was so situated he lived in a wretched room in Green Arbour Court, in the Old Bailey, a court running into Seacole Lane, and famous for the "breakneck steps" mentioned by

Ward in his "London Spy." Here, in a miserably dirty room, where there was only one chair, so that when the compiler of the Percy Reliques called upon him and occupied it, there was nothing left but to sit on the window, Goldsmith wrote his "Enquiry into the State of Polite Learning in Europe." During the visit there came a gentle tap at the door, and a poor, ragged little girl, of very decent behaviour, came in, with "Mamma's compliments" and a polite request for the loan of a small quantity of coals.

A suggestive anecdote this; illustrative of the benevolent kindness—some people called it the easy good-nature—of the citizen of the world, who was as much a child in many respects as the ragged little petitioner. Good-nature, and his losses by gambling, kept him poor till the day of his death, in 1774, at No. 2, Brick Court, Temple, where he had chambers on the second floor, above those of Sir William Blackstone.

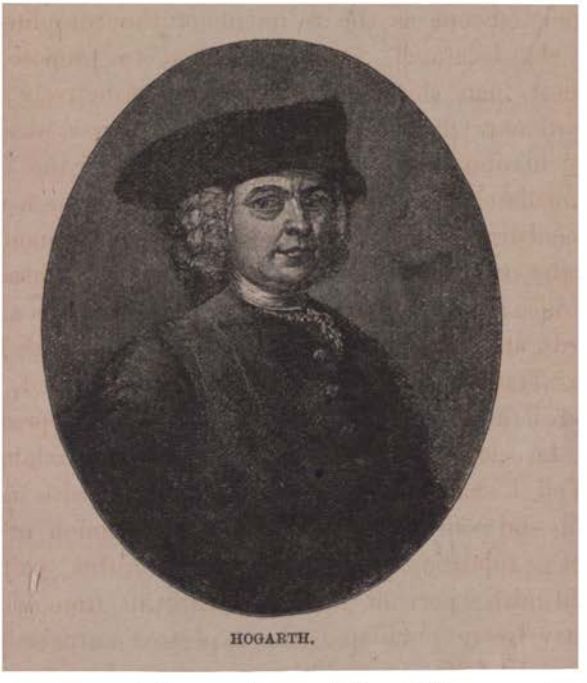
Goldsmith was closely attached to Johnson, for whom he had a genuine admiration and respect, and the poet, though he was often the object of banter among his friends for his simplicity, said charming and witty things. One of his finest sayings was in answer to Boswell, who wondered that the Doctor should have been very kind to a man of bad character—"He is now become miserable, and that ensures the protection of Johnson."

Goldsmith removed from Green Arbour Court to Wine Office Court, Fleet Street, so named from the office for licences for selling wines which was situated

there, and famous for a celebrated tavern, "The Old Cheshire Cheese," which, during Johnson's time and ever since, has been the resort of men of letters in the great highway. There the Doctor and his friends sat in the room which is shown to their successors to-day as the scene of many glorious confabulations—the queer old room on the left of the low-browed entrance. There is the corner where Dr. Johnson sat, and the place is famous still for its steaks, its chops, its kidneys, its "punch," its port wine and ale, while gin still goes there by the name of "rack" or "arrack," and on certain days, the hungry visitor may there partake of the celebrated rump-steak, kidney, and oyster puddings, the carefully prepared stewed tripe, or the savoury Irish stew. A queer ramshackle old tavern, with an angular and precipitous staircase, and little steps lying in wait for you in odd corners, leading to low-ceilinged rooms with primitive furniture; but a place where there is a good deal of solid comfort, and as traditional among the representatives of journalism in Fleet Street as the "Cogers," that famous debating society, which was established in 1756 in a tavern in Bride Lane.

Goldsmith had the soul of a scholar and a man of refined feeling, though he looked like an ordinary mechanic, and was sometimes supposed to be a journeyman tailor. That is what was said of him by some of those who cordially admired his talents; but, as we have seen, the tailors have held a very good place in the Highway of Letters. There can be no doubt, however, that "poor Goldy" was often

exceedingly *gauche* in manner, and his simple clumsiness was accentuated by his singular vanity, not only displayed in dress when he could afford new clothes, but in his opinion of his own literary ability. He is almost a unique example of a man of delicate



HOGARTH.

literary appreciation and exquisite skill as a story-teller and dramatist, who yet could display a coarse, an almost greedy desire, not only for his attainments but for his gentility, to be acknowledged.

One of the pleasantest resorts of the circle which included Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, and the more distinguished members of the club in Gerrard Street,

was at Sir Joshua Reynolds' house in Leicester Square, where the famous painter gave excellent and unconventional suppers, at which Reynolds' sister, a rather plain lady, presided, and other ladies were sometimes present. After supper it was customary to propose a toast, and Miss Reynolds was asked to name someone as the recipient of the compliment. As she hesitated, she was required to propose the ugliest man she knew. Almost instinctively she mentioned Oliver Goldsmith, who, of course, was not present, and a lady on the opposite side of the table immediately rose and shook hands with her as a sign of concurrence. "Thus," said Johnson, "the ancients, in the commencements of their friendships, used to sacrifice a beast betwixt them." But a few days afterwards, at another meeting, the Doctor took with him the "Traveller," which had just been published, and read it aloud, to the delight of everybody present. As he closed the book Miss Reynolds exclaimed, "Well, I shall never more think Dr. Goldsmith ugly." Still, she could not easily dispel her opinion of the poet's appearance, for when her brother painted Goldsmith's portrait, and the mezzotint from it was pretty freely circulated, she expressed surprise that so much of dignity could be given to such a face and the likeness be preserved, "as Dr. Goldsmith's cast of countenance, and, indeed, his whole appearance from head to foot, impressed every one at first sight with the idea of his being a low mechanic, particularly, I believe, a journeyman tailor."

The latter notion was probably founded on

what Goldsmith had himself said, when he once went into Reynolds' drawing-room, fussing at some affront which he imagined had been offered him in an adjacent coffee-house, by "a fellow who took me, I believe, for a tailor." It was no wonder that the company laughed, but they were certainly too ready to play off rather too personal jests at the expense of the simple, vain, sensitive genius.

We cannot well imagine Reynolds himself taking any unkindly pleasure in rallying his friend, for his was a gentle, generous, and affectionate nature.

It is said that one reason of the famous portrait painter's placid, happy life among his friends and at his club was his observation of two maxims which his father, a learned, simple-minded schoolmaster in Devonshire, master of the Plympton Grammar School, had inculcated. Those maxims were—"The great principle of being happy in this world is not to mind or be affected with small things"; and, "If you take too much care of yourself nature will cease to take care of you."

Young Reynolds seems to have made practical test of these principles, and though, after he had ceased to study with his master, Hudson, he went to live in Rome, and while copying in a chamber of the Vatican caught the severe cold which made him deaf for life, he may be said to have carried them out successfully.

When Reynolds settled in London, in St. Martin's Lane, in 1753, Hogarth no longer painted portraits, and had, in fact, done nearly all his best work.

Hudson was the fashionable portrait painter, but there was enough for Reynolds to do also, and we find him raising his prices from five to twelve guineas for a head, and, at a rather later date, both he and Hudson charging fifteen for a head, thirty for a half-length, and sixty for a full-length portrait—fees which to some modern successful artists in the first rank doubtless seem contemptible.

Reynolds was an inveterate snuff-taker, and this habit and his compulsory use of an ear-trumpet for the purpose of following the conversation of his friends, are alluded to in Goldsmith's famous lines in "The Retaliation," where his tender regard for the gentle and accomplished artist finds expression—

"Here Reynolds is laid, and to tell you my mind,
He has not left a wiser or better behind.
His pencil was striking, resistless and grand,
His manners were gentle, complying and bland;
Still born to improve us in every part—
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart;
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,
When they judged without skill, he was still hard of hearing;
When they talked of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,
He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff."

It seems likely from the date that it was from Wine Office Court that Goldsmith sent to Doctor Johnson to borrow a guinea to pacify his landlady, and that the Doctor carried from there the manuscript of "The Vicar of Wakefield," which he sold for sixty pounds; but Prior represents Goldsmith as living there with a friend or relative of Mr. Newbery, the famous children's bookseller of the corner of St. Paul's Churchyard, for whom Goldsmith doubtless

wrote some of the very juvenile literature in vogue in those days.

Mr. Newbery was one of the best known men in the Highway of Letters at that time, and it was of him that Johnson borrowed guineas when he was "hard up" for money. Goldsmith said of this kind-hearted publisher of children's books, that he "was the patron of more distressed authors than any man of his time." He appears always to have been in a hurry—perhaps to avoid thanks for his kindnesses. He is mentioned with respect and goodwill by other writers beside Goldsmith, who introduces him in "The Vicar of Wakefield" as "the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard," who calls at the ale-house where the vicar, who is detained for debt, immediately recollects the red, pimpled face of the good man who had published for him against the Deuterogamists, and of whom he borrowed a few pieces.

Mr. Newbery's benefactions were frequent and unostentatious, and he derived considerable profits from his share in the sale of Dr. James's famous powder, of which he was one of the vendors. Though Johnson had frequent occasion to borrow guineas while waiting for payment for his work, he had the satisfaction of being free from the hateful trammels of the "dedication" and "the patron," without whose aid, in the shape of a present or gratuity, in return for the compliment of inscribing book or play to his honour, few authors or dramatists could realise success. Johnson had, with manly determination,

shaken himself free from the supercilious assumptions of Lord Chesterfield, and completed his Dictionary without his aid, but till he received a pension of £300 a year from the Government, in acknowledgment of his services to learning, he was often in

COGERS' HALL. (*From an Old Print*) (*p.* 399).

temporary difficulty, especially as he was an open-handed, generous friend to those poorer than himself.

That he had a sincere regard for Richardson is not surprising, for Richardson was undoubtedly a good and kindly man, and Johnson thought highly, and spoke highly, of his novels, which is surprising to most modern readers, who have been amazed rather than amused that a book like "Pamela" should not only have "caught on," as the modern phrase is, but should have been regarded as a suitable present for a

young woman going out into the world. Richardson wrote it for the purpose of providing something less artificial and absurd than the trashy romances which were in that day provided for young people; and instead of making his characters absurd persons of title, took for a heroine a rustic servant girl, whose virtuous resolution sustained her against continuous and repeated endeavours to overcome it. That this book should have been received with unstinted admiration in families, and that the author should have read it aloud (as he did his subsequent novels of "Clarissa Harlowe" and "Sir Charles Grandison") to a circle of ladies, is one of the problems to be solved by considering the marvellous changes of points of view which have marked the history of that "Polite Literature" of which Goldsmith wrote.

Richardson had what seems to be an unreasonable antipathy to Fielding and his works, and Dr. Johnson, in comparing the two, favours Richardson as a subtle delineator of character and the springs and motives of human actions, while he considers that Fielding only describes the effects of character in conduct and manners. There can be little doubt that the Doctor leaned towards Richardson in consequence of his personal regard for him; but Mrs. Piozzi said that Johnson acknowledged he had read "Amelia" through without stopping, and though "Joseph Andrews" was commenced as a kind of parody on "Pamela," the author soon gave evidence of power and ability which took it out of the ranks of mere burlesque and made it vividly real and original.

Richardson had always dwelt much in the society of women. As a youth he had frequently been employed by illiterate young women to write their love letters. In his maturer age, and especially after his second marriage, he was always surrounded by ladies who were visitors staying with his wife and daughters, either at his second house in Salisbury Square, or at his country residence at North End, Fulham, where, though his nervous temperament sometimes prevented him from giving visitors much of his company, he benevolently entertained those who needed rest and change of air, and received several who were sick and suffering. Strangely enough, the sisters of Fielding were among the intimate friends of Richardson's family, which says much for his real amiability of temper, notwithstanding occasional pettishness and intolerance of rivalry in the world of fiction. There was plenty of testimony to the domestic and social character of Richardson from those who were most frequently associated with him, as we may read in Mrs. Barbauld's letters, in one of which she quotes from an aged correspondent—

"My first recollection of him was in his house in the centre of Salisbury Square, or Salisbury Court, as it was then called, and of being admitted as a playful child into his study, where I have often seen Mr. Young and others, and where I was generally caressed and rewarded with biscuits or *bonbons* of some kind or other, and sometimes with books, for which he, and some more of my friends, kindly encouraged a taste, even at that early age. . . . I recollect that he used to drop in at my father's, for we lived nearly opposite, late in the evening to supper, when, as he would say, he had worked as long as his eyes and nerves would let him, and was come to relax with a little friendly and domestic chat. I, even then, used to creep to his knee and hang upon his words, for my whole

family doted on him; and once, I recollect that at one of these evening visits, probably about the year 1753, I was standing by his knee when my mother's maid came to summon me to bed, upon which, being unwilling to part from him, and manifesting some reluctance, he begged I might be permitted to stay a little longer, and, on my mother's objecting that the servant would be wanted to wait at supper (for in those days of friendly intercourse and *real* hospitality, a decent maid-servant was the only attendant at *his own* and many creditable tables, where, nevertheless, much company was received), Mr. Richardson said, 'I am sure Miss P. is now so much a woman that she does not want anyone to attend her to bed, but will conduct herself with so much propriety, and put out her own candle so carefully, that she may henceforward be indulged with remaining with us till supper is served.' This hint, and the confidence it implied, had such a good effect upon me that I believe I never required the attendance of a servant afterwards while my mother lived; and by such sort of ingenious and gentle devices did he use to encourage and draw on young people to do what was right. I also well remember the happy days I passed at his house at North End, sometimes with my mother, but often for weeks without her, domesticated as one of his own children. He used to pass the greater part of the week in town; but when he came down, he used to like to have his family flock around him, when we all first asked and received his blessing, together with some small boon from his paternal kindness and attention, for he seldom met us empty handed, and was by nature most generous and liberal."

Mrs. Barbauld herself says of him—

"The piety, order, decorum, and strict regularity that prevailed in his family were of infinite use to train the mind to good habits and to depend upon its own resources. It has been one of the means which, under the blessing of God, has enabled me to dispense with the enjoyment of what the world calls pleasures, such as are found in crowds, and actually to relish and prefer the calm delights of retirement and books.

"As soon as Mrs. Richardson arose, the beautiful Psalms in 'Smith's Devotions' were read responsively in the nursery by herself and daughters, standing in a circle. Only the two eldest were allowed to breakfast with her and whatever company happened to be in the house, for they were seldom without. After breakfast we younger ones read to her in turns the Psalms and Lessons for the day. We were then permitted to pursue our childish sports, or to walk in the garden. All dined at one table, and generally drank tea

and spent the evening in Mrs. Richardson's parlour, where the practice was for one of the young ladies to read while the rest sat round a large table, and employed themselves in some kind of needlework. Mr. Richardson generally retired to his study, unless there was particular company. . .

"He was all his lifetime the patron and protector of the female sex. Miss M—— (afterwards Lady G——) passed many years in his family. She was the bosom friend and contemporary of my mother, and was so much considered as *enfant de famille* in Mr. Richardson's house that her portrait is introduced into a family piece.

"He had many *protégées*—a Miss Rosine, from Portugal, was consigned to his care; but of her, being then at school, I never saw much. Most of the ladies that resided much at his house acquired a certain degree of fastidiousness and delicate refinement, which, though amiable in itself, rather disqualified them from appearing in general society to the advantage that might have been expected, and rendered an intercourse with the world uneasy to themselves, giving a peculiar air of shyness and reserve to their whole address."

SOPHIA RESCUED. (*From Harrison's Edition of "The Vicar of Wakefield,"* 1780.)

The shy, reserved, rather prim, plump little man, with his fair wig, his light brown complexion, his hand in the bosom of his vest, his other hand leaning on a cane half concealed by the skirts of his coat, but supporting him in case of a sudden dizziness, to which he was subject, was not easily "drawn out." Sir John Hawkins, Johnson's biographer, tried

to make his acquaintance in a coach, but failed. Richardson would not have cared for the company of the pragmatical and somewhat "superior" Sir John, who might have been called "Haw-Haw-kins," and was described indirectly in an epitaph—

> "Here lies Sir John Hawkins
> Without shoes or *stawkins*."

It is worth recording that some of Dr. Johnson's supposed "tricks" had more reason than many people supposed; for instance, his secreting the pieces of Seville orange peel when punch, or negus, or "bishop" was being compounded, and storing them on a shelf in his room, is accounted for by his practice of dabbling in all kinds of remedies. In a letter to one of his earliest and most devotedly-admired lady friends, Miss Boothby, he advises her to take grated orange peel in port wine as a stomachic. He was frequently writing to his friends about their health and his own, and advising them to try certain remedies which often had little relation to the disorders to alleviate which he thought they would be effectual. His own extreme measures with regard to his physical sufferings were such that nothing but his original strength of constitution could have enabled him to live to be seventy-five. Though he suffered from gout, he alternated between rigid abstinence and considerable indulgence in port, between copious blood-letting and as copious tea-drinking. When he drank lemonade he loaded it with sugar; he would starve for many hours, and almost fast for many days, and then go

and eat a large dinner, including dishes that only a camel's digestion could have thoroughly disposed of. It was not that he was intemperate, but he was fond of good things and was undiscriminating. Had he not been given to amateur doctoring, or even if he had left the care of his health to old surgeon Levett, who lived with him, and was one of his poor pensioners, he would probably have enjoyed life more, and taken serener views of it; but he did enjoy it in a way, and when he could be in the company he loved, his low, thunderous, chuckling laugh (Davies said he laughed "like a rhinoceros") sounded frequently enough. Conversation was his delight, though he seldom commenced it. In fact, his friend Tom Tyers said he was like the ghosts, who never speak till they are spoken to, and the remark pleased him mightily.

It was on April 23rd, 1773, that Johnson wrote to Goldsmith, who was to take the chair at "The Club," that he was about to propose Boswell as a member. He had come up to town from Oxford to be present, as he feared that some of the members would keep Bozzy out. Unlike Johnson, who was a punctual and frequent correspondent, Goldsmith "never wrote a letter in his life," and does not seem to have replied, but Boswell was elected on the 30th, and his great ambition was gratified.

Mrs. Thrale says, in one of her gushing tributes to Dr. Johnson, that it might have been said of him, as he often delighted to say of Edmund Burke, that, "you could not stand five minutes with that man beneath a shed, while it rained, but you must be convinced you

had been standing with the greatest man you had ever seen." This was high praise indeed, and Burke, an *habitué* of Fleet Street, because of his desire to be in the charmed circle, doubtless lent brilliancy to the little coteries that met there, or at the club in Gerrard Street, though Johnson's respect scarcely followed him to his retirement to Beaconsfield, after he had received a large sum of money from Lord Rockingham, nor did the Fleet Street sage refrain from a severe comment on the subject.

The fact of his receiving a pension from the Government long prevented Johnson from taking any part in the political contentions which ended in the disturbances associated with John Wilkes and his *North Briton*. But he did not escape by silence the ridicule of the caricaturists and the coarse satirists, who attacked other eminent pensioners of Lord Bute, including Hogarth and Smollett. In 1762 Hogarth had entered the lists in defence of the Government, against his old friends, Wilkes and Churchill. Wilkes had heard of his intention, and endeavoured to dissuade him, at the same time threatening retaliation. Hogarth, however, persisted in publishing his caricatures, and the retaliation came in a series of such bitter and unscrupulous jibes, with illustrations to match, that it was said the death of the great artist, in 1764, was hastened, if not caused, by the persecution which he had brought on himself. He had of course made the most of Wilkes' hideous squint and underhung jaw; but for this the patriot probably cared little—he was too ugly to be unaware that his personal appearance

would be held up to ridicule, and his party was so strong in the support of the multitude that they could regard his very ugliness as a distinction.

Johnson at length ventured into the field of politics, by opposing Wilkes in a pamphlet entitled "A False Alarm," and he, too, received some notice from the caricaturists. But the quarrel grew beyond the dimensions of newspaper warfare, and the obstinacy of the young King George III., and the arrogance of his Minister, Lord Bute, led to the resignation of Pitt and subsequently to the prosecution and imprisonment of Wilkes, who had published, in No. 45 of the *North Briton*, what was called a libellous article on the King's speech. It was proposed that Wilkes should be expelled the House and the number of the *North Briton* burnt by the common hangman; but when the Sheriff of London, Alderman Harley, with the City officers and the hangman, went to Cheapside to burn the obnoxious paper, a mob of Wilkites drove them away, snatched the half-burnt "libel" from the hangman, and carried it to Temple Bar, where they had prepared their own bonfire to burn a huge jack-*boot*, which was the popular satirical symbol of the detested Scotch Minister.

Wilkes, on his return from France, was elected Member for Middlesex, and London was illuminated, though the new member, by a vote of the House, was not allowed to sit. At the instigation of the Government a loyal address was prepared, with which a procession of 600 merchants and others were to march to St. James's.

At Temple Bar the mob closed the gates and

would not suffer them to pass, but assailed them with mud and stones. They dispersed and met again, but a hearse, bearing pictorial representations of two scenes of the riots, in which there had been serious loss of life, and in one of which troops had fired on people not connected with the political demonstration, preceded the loyal addressers, who were roughly handled, until several arrests were made, when the mob dispersed.

A subscription was raised for Wilkes, who, with Colonel Glyn, was re-elected for Middlesex, in 1774, without opposition, and took his seat. He was then elected Lord Mayor, and afterwards obtained the office of Chamberlain. In 1780 he was re-elected for Middlesex, and in 1788 obtained a vote of the House to expunge from its journals the declarations formally passed against him.

In May, 1776, Boswell, who had been introduced to Wilkes, much desired to bring him and Dr. Johnson together, and contrived that he should be the bearer of an invitation to the Doctor from Mr. Edward Dilly, one of the brothers Dilly, booksellers in the Poultry. So adroitly did Boswell manage it that Johnson went with alacrity, though he knew it was possible that he might meet his former antagonist. They met. Johnson sat next to Wilkes at dinner, where a few guests had been invited to meet them, and Wilkes, by his agreeable manners and animated, as well as scholarly, conversation, so won upon the Doctor that they had a most agreeable evening.

It is not on record that Wilkes was ever invited to

one of Johnson's clubs, or that they afterwards met in either of the taverns in Fleet Street, where the Doctor and his friends may be said to have formed clubs by frequently recurring association, though, singular to say, the actual clubs were none of them in Fleet Street, but, as we have seen, the principal one was in Gerrard Street, and subsequent smaller unpretentious clubs, of quiet, sociable men, were at the Essex Head, in Essex Street; in Ivy Lane, by Paternoster Row; and the Queen's Head, St. Paul's Churchyard. Wilkes, however, was later associated with a club in Fleet Street which is still in existence.

This society, entitled the St. Dunstan's Club, was founded by seventeen gentlemen, inhabitants of the Ward of Farringdon Without, on the 10th of March, 1790, and used to meet at Anderton's Coffee House every other Wednesday evening at eight o'clock. The first chairman was the Rev. Joseph Williamson, Vicar of St. Dunstan's and Mr. Wilkes' Chaplain when he was Lord Mayor. The vice-chairman was Deputy of the Ward. Among the early members was Mr. Joseph Butterworth, in 1792, and in October the same year, Mr. John Wilkes, Alderman of the Ward, was elected. In the club register is a well-preserved lithographic portrait of Wilkes as Lord Mayor, showing the squint, the scowl, and the projecting jaw. It was published on the 9th of November 1774, and was presented to the club by Richard N. Phillips, C.C., F.S.A., on December 1st, 1863. The following is the letter, in small, neat writing, sent by Mr. Wilkes accepting the membership:—

"Grosvenor Square, Oct. 23rd, 1792.

"SIR,—I beg the favour of you, as Secretary to the Saint Dunstan's Club, to return my sincere and hearty thanks to the members of that respectable society for the distinction conferred on me by their unanimous vote of electing me an honourable member. It is no

THE TRIAL OF WILKES. (*From a Contemporary Print.*)

small addition to the satisfaction I receive on this occasion that you were pleased to communicate to me this testimony of the regard of many gentlemen so deservedly high in the esteem of our fellow citizens, and in terms so very obliging.

"I am, with respect, Sir,

"Your obliged, humble servant,

"Mr. Williams. "JOHN WILKES."

Along with the portrait of Wilkes is a finely-printed copy of his address of thanks to the electors of Middlesex, of which the ornamental heading is emblematic of civil and religious liberty, with Wilkes's portrait in the centre, of a size for cutting out to be converted into a "watch paper." The early entries in the club book are in that style of careful and ornate penmanship

seldom to be seen except in similar old records, and suggesting that specially accomplished scribes were chosen as secretaries, or employed to make the entries. They consist of reports of the proceedings—which are mostly particulars of wagers between members who, on hospitable thoughts intent, desired to treat the club to wine as an addition to the usual supper, which was so modestly inexpensive that a member could obtain a Welsh rarebit for twopence.

On the 2nd of April, 1794, we find recorded a wager of a gallon of claret that Robespierre's head would be off (if he remained in France) within a year. On the 8th of October this wager was reported to have been won, as Robespierre's head had fallen to the guillotine on the 28th of July.

Occasionally members would ask permission to present to the club, or to place upon the table, claret or port, in celebration of some event with which they were personally concerned—such as a wedding, a birthday, or election to some civic or parochial honour. What appears to be the last recorded wager is on June, 1799, when there was a discussion whether cedar-wood formed a portion of the old houses at the corner of Chancery Lane.

An annual dinner was held in the summer, mostly at the Grove House tavern, Camberwell, but was discontinued in 1796. Evidences of increased luxury seem to exist in the minutes just before this time. An annual subscription was voted, because of the increased price of wine, and venison was consumed at the annual dinner. There are also signs of the

growing custom of citizens living in the suburbs away from their business, and therefore not attending the club.

Wilkes died in December, 1797. The club seems to have been removed in 1799, and there are no precise minutes till its revival in 1851 by eleven gentlemen, inhabitants of St. Dunstan's, the liberty of the Rolls, and the precinct of Whitefriars. This new society was well supported, and meetings were held at the Sussex Hotel, Bouverie Street, till April, 1858, when the hotel was closed, and the club moved first to Dick's Coffee House, then to Peele's at the corner of Fetter Lane, then to the Rainbow, and finally to the Old Cheshire Cheese, where it remains and flourishes in something of its ancient state, its latest president having been the newly-elected, popular and accomplished Alderman of the Ward of Farringdon Without.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CLOSE OF AN ERA IN THE HIGHWAY OF LETTERS.

The Mug-house Riots—Read's in Salisbury Court—The Fleet Prison—William Penn—Richard Savage—Huggins and Bambridge—Horrible Cruelties—The Commission of Enquiry—Hogarth's Picture—The Gordon Riots—John Scott, Lord Eldon—William Scott, Lord Stowell—The "Perch," in Cursitor Street—Love and Law—Sprat Suppers—"Crocodile" Eldon—Diamond Cut Diamond—The Later Days of Dr. Johnson—The Thrales and the Riots—Death of Mr. Thrale—Marriage of Mrs. Thrale and Piozzi—Death of Dr. Johnson—From Fleet Street to Westminster Abbey—The House in Bolt Court—Stationers' Company—Newspapers—Reports of Debates Forbidden—Abbreviated Accounts of Proceedings—"Liberty of the Press"—Newspapers in 1818 and in 1893.

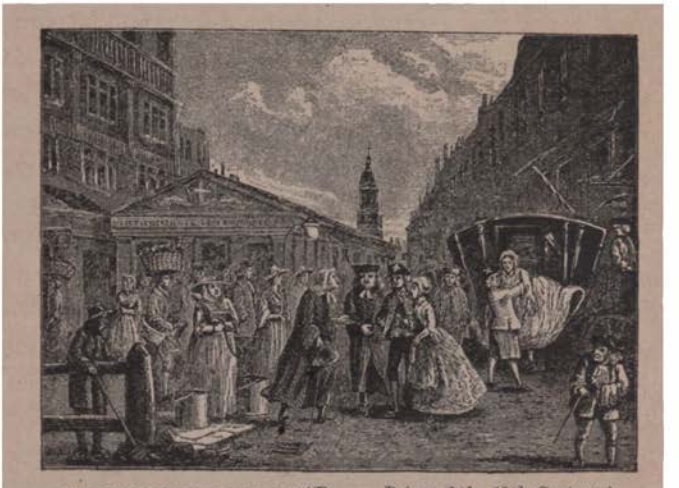
THE "Wilkes and Liberty" riots may well have reminded the frequenters of Fleet Street of the serious disturbances which had occurred there at an earlier date.

Those tumults which had previously given an evil distinction to Whitefriars had mostly ceased after the abolition, in the reign of William III., of those pretended rights of sanctuary which had been claimed in some quarters of London, but Richardson was twenty-six years old—and was probably still working as a journeyman with Mr. Wild, the printer, to whom he had been apprenticed—when Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, the scene of his future labours and his future fame, was noted for serious riots at an alehouse kept there by one Read. This house became a "mug-house," or one of the taverns, of which there

were several in the neighbourhood, where the Whig supporters of the House of Hanover met in defiance of the Tories, who had frequently gathered the largest mobs on some public occasions. The "mug-houses" seem to have originated in Long Acre, where clubs were formed at certain taverns, in which lawyers, tradesmen, and some of the Whig gentlemen used to meet in the evenings to drink ale, each out of his own mug. The president sat on a high chair, a harp was played at the lower end of the room, and now and then one of the company enlivened the proceedings with a song. These "mug-houses" were afterwards established in various quarters, for the express purpose of enabling loyal tradesmen to assemble for the purpose of political demonstrations against the Jacobites, who, in return, gathered in force, and succeeded in wrecking some of the taverns. Among the first of the "mug-houses" attacked by them was that kept by Read, into which the mob succeeded in forcing a way, driving the customers upstairs, breaking up the furniture, flinging the mugs into the street, and drinking the ale. There was a desperate fight, and Read, who was severely beaten, shot the ringleader, for which he was afterwards tried for murder, but acquitted. The riots reached to a pitch which demanded strong measures, and a military force was employed to suppress them—the end of it being that several lads were hanged for participation in tumults in which they had probably joined from sheer mischief.

The Fleet Prison, though it had ceased to be a

place for the incarceration of political offenders, and was, in name at least, reserved for debtors only, after the abolition of the Star Chamber, had still an evil reputation for the cruelties to which the unfortunate wretches were subjected who were detained there



WEDDING IN THE FLEET. (*From a Print of the 18th Century.*)

—many of them hopeless of obtaining release from merciless creditors, and many also who, being confined there for contempt of court, found that they were consigned to what was likely to be perpetual imprisonment, because of their inability to follow any avocation by which they could earn money for the discharge of their liabilities.

The old prison, burnt down in the Great Fire, had been succeeded by another building, in which the old atrocities seemed to be perpetuated. Those prisoners who could find friends to pay for the privilege of

taking lodgings for them "within the rules" were mostly such as were able to look forward to obtaining a release, and as "the rules" extended to a considerable neighbourhood around the prison walls, their personal liberty was considerable, though they had to pay for the surveillance of one of the prison officials. William Penn had been one of those to whom this privilege was granted; and later, the unhappy and ill-regulated Richard Savage had been maintained in lodgings in "the liberty of the Fleet" by friends, who seemed to think that it was about as much liberty as he would be likely to profit by. Within the prison itself the atrocities were such that they rivalled those inflicted by the former wicked warden, of whom we have already spoken.

The office of warden was a patent office, and was often sold or let for a period to the highest bidder. The person who rented it, therefore, made as much as possible out of the miserable creatures who were at his mercy, by mulcts and exorbitant charges, enforced by close confinement, fetters, starvation, and sometimes by the use of actual instruments of torture. The dark and horrible records of the Fleet Prison—such of them as were made public by the evidence taken by a Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry in 1725—are like a minor episode in the history of the Inquisition, and include several varieties of inhumanity, among which were the refusal of common necessaries of life, exposure to gaol fever and smallpox, with the prospect of death from one or other of these diseases alone terminating the

hopeless incarceration of those who could not comply with the monstrous exactions for permission to remain in one of the three "spunging houses" attached to the prison, and belonging to the chief warden, or to find a squalid lodging outside the walls, and pay extra fees for the watchful attendance of an under-warden.

The wardenship had been rented by a scoundrel named Huggins, and he underlet it to one Bambridge, an equally rapacious and a still more hardened and inhuman wretch, who not only inflicted cruelties on the unfortunate prisoners on a kind of graduated scale, in accordance with their reluctance or inability, or that of their friends, to yield to his extortions, but actually kept several persons in durance after they had been legally discharged, and, in some instances, kidnapped liberated prisoners and forcibly kept them in the Fleet, that he might exact money for their maintenance or a large sum for their ultimate release. This villain would connive at the escape of a prisoner for a handsome consideration, but the chances were that the victim would be re-arrested after the bribe was paid. Prisoners of importance were charged heavily for permission to live within "the liberties" of the gaol. Those who could not pay, but were suspected of having affluent friends, were consigned to the worst cells, loaded with irons, deprived of food, or punished with instruments of torture, which they were forced to wear till their limbs and bodies were cramped and distorted. The rapacity of Bambridge was such

that he even seized the contributions dropped by charitable persons into the box held by the suffering and starving wretches, who took their turns at the small grate, or opening, by the gate, where they uttered their doleful appeals to the humanity of those who passed to and from Fleet Street, and were implored to "remember the poor debtors."

The evil reputation which clung to the Fleet Prison when Prynne had his nose slit and his ears cut off, and "honest John Lilburne" stood in the pillory and addressed the crowd in dumb show after he had been gagged, was perpetuated when its inmates were no longer regarded as prisoners of State, placed there for political offences.

Poets, essayists, pamphleteers, frequenting the Highway of Letters, had denounced the monstrous iniquities of the place and the cruelties inflicted there, and at last a parliamentary committee of enquiry was appointed, and sat at the prison, where witnesses were examined and some of the miserable victims were brought forward and confronted with Bambridge and his myrmidons.

The well-known picture by Hogarth depicts the scene, and its publication doubtless hastened the suppression of the infamous practices, just as the word-painting of Charles Dickens, who was the Hogarth of modern literature, expedited the destruction of the building which succeeded to the reversion of an evil reputation. He exposed, in "Pickwick," the misery and injustice which attended the system of imprisonment for debt made per-

petual by so-called contempt of court, which often meant not refusal, but inability, to pay the instalments ordered for debts and costs. How, without release, there could be means of earning money for the satisfaction of creditors and officials, does not appear to have been considered.

Before the parliamentary enquiry, Huggins, the original renter of the wardenship, grew alarmed, and mitigated some of the neglect and cruelty; but Bambridge, a more resolute and truculent scoundrel, continued his extortions while the committee was deliberating, and he was suffered to retain the position which he had purchased till the enquiry concluded in a determination that he should no longer hold the office. It is said that twenty years after the examination he cut his throat, but whether through fear or remorse is not known. The more monstrous cruelties inflicted on the prisoners were diminished or had ceased, and the instruments of torture had been removed; but cases of serious inhumanity and oppression continued until the Fleet Prison was burnt and demolished, along with Newgate and Bridewell, by the Anti-Popery rioters in 1780, amidst the depredations committed by those lawless followers of Lord George Gordon.

To depict the aspect of the Highway of Letters during that time, when the vast multitude of rioters filled the streets, and unchecked by a timid and appalled magistracy and an undecided Government, carried death and destruction with them, and let loose on law-abiding citizens the worst calamities

attending the abandonment of all regard for law and for humanity, would be superfluous. The great master of fiction has told that story in "Barnaby Rudge" with a fidelity and an historical accuracy which is illumined, and in no way exaggerated, by the vivid and picturesque manner in which the narrative is presented.

Before the suppression of the riots, soldiers were picketed in churchyards and in the halls of City Companies, the Inns of Court were barricaded, and at the Temple a strong body of the members assembled within the gates to repel any attack that might be made. It turned out that they were rather an obstruction than otherwise to the military officers who commanded a small detachment of soldiers for their protection; and Fleet Street was, in fact, almost entirely occupied by troops when the excesses of the enormous crowds which had concentrated in Holborn had grown beyond the power of the timid civil authorities to prevent them.

Among the members of the Temple who mounted guard inside the gate was John Scott, afterwards Lord Eldon. He and his elder brother, William, afterwards Lord Stowell, were both in London. They were sons of a coal "fitter" and publican of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and were both destined to become eminent judges—John rising by various stages of legal honours to the Chancellorship and the title of Earl of Eldon, and William to be Chief Judge of the Admiralty Court, with the title of Lord Stowell. Early in his professional career William was introduced to Dr. Johnson,

and by his influence was elected a member of the Literary Club. Both the brothers were prominent figures in Fleet Street, as they would have been anywhere, because of their tall and robust forms and handsome appearance, but the name of John Scott was most often associated with the Highway of Letters and with Chancery Lane; for, as he afterwards told his secretary, Cursitor Street was his "first perch," and he had often run to Fleet Market with sixpence in his hand to buy sprats for supper. The coal fitter, publican and insurance broker of Newcastle had made some money, and sent his sons to Oxford, and John, at twenty-one years of age, while still a student, and without any profession or calling, fell in love with Miss Elizabeth Surtees, a young lady of remarkable beauty, daughter of a Newcastle banker. As his pretensions were not favourably received by the family, John Scott persuaded her to elope with him, and they were married at Gretna Green. On their return they were not, of course, received with enthusiasm, and though the father of the bride was kindly, it was two or three years before a complete reconciliation took place. The young couple, who were deeply devoted to each other, came to London, where John entered as a student at the Temple, and commenced the career which was marked by a series of attainments to high legal offices till he became Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and Lord Chancellor in 1801. He virtually retired after the death of his beloved wife in 1831, and his old age became lonely. He had not made intimate

friends of men of rank and station, and such companions as he associated with were mostly somewhat commonplace gossips. Unlike his brother, he had never cultivated any proficiency either in writing or speaking elegantly, or even correctly. His judgments in Chancery were expressed in almost illiterate fashion, and he was exceedingly tedious. On the trial for treason of the famous Horne Tooke and Thomas Hardy, the Secretary of the London Correspondents' Society, he spoke for eight hours. Tooke who was a scholar, and it may be supposed somewhat of a purist as regarded style and expression, said, when acquitted, that he would rather be hanged out of hand next time than listen to one of Sir John Scott's speeches.

JOHNSON'S PEW IN ST. CLEMENT DANES'.

It was said that Scott took so long to make up his mind that suitors suffered more injury than would have been inflicted by a wrong decision. There were many amusing, but often scurrilous, jests current on the subject of these see-saw judgments, and his readiness to shed tears at the time that he pronounced

judgment emphasised the adverse opinion that his conclusions were not always to be respected. Of course, a great deal was made of this habit by those who considered themselves the victims of an inequitable decision. His declaration, with an oath and a tear or two, that Queen Caroline was guilty, procured him the dislike of the public and the sobriquet of "Crocodile Eldon," while the seathing lines in Shelley's "Masque of Anarchy"—directed against the judge for his perfectly legal and moderate decision in the trial which settled the question of the custody of the poet's children—made the charges of vacillation and hypocrisy still more significant:—

> "Next came Fraud, and he had on,
> Like Lord E——, an ermine gown;
> His big tears—for he wept well—
> Turned to millstones as they fell;
> And the little children, who
> Round his feet played to and fro,
> Thinking every tear a gem,
> Had their brains knocked out by them."

Eldon socially had the reputation, not undeserved, of being mean even to inexcusable parsimony, though he was known to give away considerable sums, because he could not endure to witness pain or distress. This quality may be taken into account in estimating his habit of crying on the bench, and he was certainly not a hard-hearted man. He liked what are called the pleasures of the table, but they were greatest when, like the intoxicated fly in the late Harry Leigh's song, he could indulge in "the rapture of drinking at somebody else's expense." His own

favourite dish was liver and bacon, and for a night-cap a great goblet of ale; that of his brother, Lord Stowell, was steak and oyster pie, with a bottle or two of port. Either of them, however, would, as John said of William, drink any *given* quantity of wine, and both possessed a certain fascination of manner and person which made them frequent guests at well-supplied feasts. Probably Lord Stowell was as *close* as his brother, and his characteristic was known. It was he who, sitting next to the famous physician, Sir Henry Halford, at dinner, asked him a question which involved a medical opinion, and would ordinarily have carried a fee. The acute doctor was not to be caught so easily, and replied, "A man's health is generally in his own keeping; you know the old saying, that at forty a man is either a fool or a physician." "Why not both?" retorted the unruffled lawyer.

We may, perhaps, touch more lightly on Lord Eldon's alleged meanness if we remember that early necessities, and the need for rigid economy, have this effect on some natures, and certainly John Scott, the law student, and his pretty young wife were poor enough; but the poverty was associated with romantic and sincere affection, which continued to the last.

There are few brighter or more suggestive pictures in the story of the neighbourhood of Fleet Street than that of the handsome, stalwart young husband working at his books, with a wet towel bound round his head, in the humble lodging, while the beautiful

young wife, his ever-loved "Bessie," comes, fresh and blooming, along Carey Street, carrying in one hand a dish of sprats, which she has purchased in Clare Market, and in the other is a pot of foaming porter, food and drink for an excellent supper where love is.

Not the least remarkable feature of the Gordon riots was the activity of Alderman John Wilkes, who was not the sort of man to show the white feather, but immediately formed a band of volunteers for the protection of the Bank of England, and probably diverted a threatened attack upon it by the mob. He had become a comparatively staid and loyal person, and the riots which had been signalised by the burning of the boot at Temple Bar were beginning to be forgotten.

Dr. Johnson himself, in Bolt Court, had ample opportunity of witnessing the terror and destruction caused by the ungovernable mob, which in a few days had so cowed the authorities that a horseman, quite alone, rode down Fleet Street demanding money for the rioters, which the tradesmen there were afraid to refuse to hand to him. The shopkeepers did not call his authority in question lest they should be denounced and their houses marked for pillage and demolition.

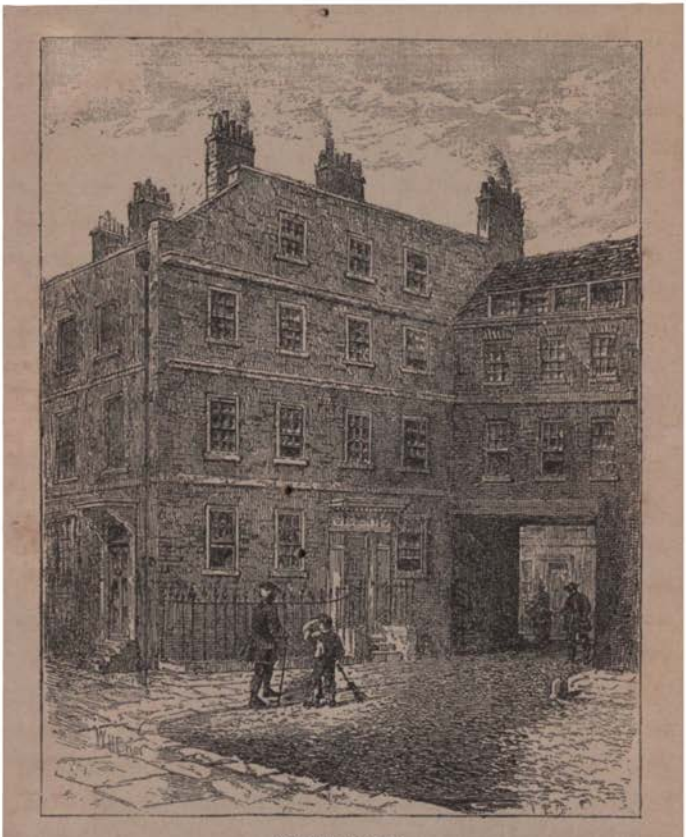
In letters to Mrs. Thrale, the Doctor, then seventy years of age, gave some account of the riots after they had been suppressed. The Thrale family were at Bath for Mrs. Thrale's health, and their old friend in Bolt Court refrained from sending details while

everybody was "impressed with consternation," nobody being sure of safety. He mentions the destruction of Lord Mansfield's house, and of that of Sir John Fielding, the blind magistrate, and brother of Henry Fielding, the novelist—who had the courage to commit to prison such rioters as were arrested at an early stage of the outbreak.

He walked to see the ruins of Newgate with Dr. Scott, afterwards Lord Stowell, and saw the mob deliberately robbing the Sessions House in the Old Bailey. There was some prudence in his waiting till the riots were suppressed before writing to the Thrales, for the Southwark contingent of the mob had threatened the house, and particularly the brewery, under the assumption or pretence that the brewer was a Papist. By the prompt adriotness of Perkins, the manager, the invaders were pacified by being voluntarily supplied with plenty of beer and an ample meal; and though Miss Burney's diary informs us that the house was three times attacked, and that the house at Streatham was threatened, the children, plate, money, and valuables were removed. A body of Guards arriving at St. Margaret's Hill in Southwark, a number of rioters were arrested, and the danger was at an end. This was communicated to Mrs. Thrale by the Doctor, though she had already received the news from Perkins.* The Thrales hastily left Bath for Brighton, and thence home. Mrs. Thrale wrote to Miss Burney: "My master was

* He became a partner of the Barclays, the purchasers of the brewery after Thrale's death.

not displeased that I had given Perkins two hundred guineas, instead of one—a secret I never durst tell before, not even to Johnson, not even to you."



GOUGH SQUARE.

Subsequent letters from Johnson repeated some further details, the committal of Lord George Gordon to the Tower, and the suppression of the riots by the

troops. In one of these he wrote: "Mr. John Wilkes was this day with a party of soldiers in my neighbourhood to seize the publisher of a seditious paper." Wilkes had been elected City Chamberlain, and his politics had undergone considerable mitigation, if not transformation.

On the whole, this was perhaps one of the happiest periods—or, at all events, the most serene period—of Johnson's life. He was closely engaged on his "Lives of the Poets," which gave him constant occupation and yet allowed him some leisure for visiting and entertaining some of the friends who were left to him; and his health improved, probably in consequence of his engagements leaving him little time for brooding over his ailments. His letters had less of that querulous tone which too often seems to disturb his correspondence. And there were other evidences of his calm and equable condition, one of which was his writing to his former negro servant, Francis Barber, from Rochester, to prepare a little dinner to celebrate his birthday on his return—an anniversary all reference to which he had formerly avoided. But the dinner was to be for those of his poor friends who still lived in his house in Bolt Court, or those who were to be invited thither. Whenever he had a suitable home he housed poor friends, who were, to some extent at least, pensioners depending on his bounty for lodging and partial support; and these he treated with polite consideration, inviting them to dinner with him, or dining or taking tea with one or other

of them, by his own request or their invitation, and in their own apartments. Poor blind old Mrs. Williams, the daughter of a Welsh gentleman, had come to London to consult an oculist, and had taken up her abode in Gough Square while Mrs. Johnson was living; and when the Doctor went to Bolt Court she was reinstated, and treated with a gentle consideration which must have been sometimes difficult, especially when the Doctor had to interpose between her and Mrs. Desmoulins and her daughter, two other inmates. These, with the poor old broken-down surgeon —who still had his own little works of charity and benevolence to maintain—and Francis Barber, the negro lad who had been his attendant from the early days of his living in London, and who, when married, remained in his service, formed the household, in which the large and considerate humanity of Johnson could endure even the bickerings of the women rather than abandon his self-imposed care of them in their poverty or distress.

To Mrs. Williams, because of her affliction, and also because of sympathy with her mental capacity and sound common sense, he was always obliging and respectful, though she was often querulous and exacting. When he went out to dine at the Mitre he would often send her some little dainty, lest she should feel that she had been neglected. These traits of genuine tenderness and disinterested beneficence were expressed without ostentation, and only his intimate friends knew of his simple, unaffected charity. We are too much accustomed to regard

Johnson's character as interpreted by his argumentative utterances, his deep, sonorous voice, and his huge, ungainly figure, and pay too little attention to the subtle observation and estimate of sentiment and emotion which often appeared in his conversation and his writings. This quality of insight into the deeper springs of character may have been the cause of his accentuated preference of Richardson to Fielding. What can be finer, for instance, than the passage in the "Rambler" where he says "There are minds so impatient of inferiority that their gratitude is a species of revenge, and they return benefits not because recompense is a pleasure, but because obligation is a pain"?

Not all his auditors could estimate the real depth of Johnson's character, and it appears that they could not always interpret his persiflage or the talent which he displayed for travesty or burlesque. He was so *very* serious when he was serious, and so impressive when he was profound, that people were ever ready to take his utterances seriously, nor can we who read of them always discriminate. For instance, was he speaking from self-conviction when, the conversation turning upon Dr. Barnard, the provost of Eton, who had recently died, Johnson, after eulogising his wit, his learning, and goodness of heart, said, with apparent seriousness, "He was the only man that did justice to my breeding; and you may observe that I am well-bred to a degree of needless scrupulosity. No man is so cautious not to interrupt another; no man thinks it so necessary to appear

attentive when others are speaking; no man so steadily refuses preference to himself, or so willingly bestows it on another as I do; nobody holds so strongly as I do the necessity of ceremony and the ill-effects which follow the breach of it. Yet people think me rude, but Barnard did me justice"?

It is to the alleged recollections of Mrs. Thrale when she had become Mrs. Piozzi, that we owe the anecdote, and the statement that Johnson's declaration was listened to by his friends with amazement. Is it possible that this, like other statements of that lady, after the termination of the long friendship, till a short time before the Doctor's death, is to be received with some amount of hesitation? There is ample evidence that she was not always accurate in her anecdotes, or scrupulous in her representations.

In another reminiscence she records that "Mr. Johnson was exceedingly disposed to the general indulgence of children, and was even scrupulously and ceremoniously attentive not to offend them. He had strongly persuaded himself of the difficulty people always find to erase early impressions, either of kindness or resentment."

In less than a year after the Gordon riots, and Johnson's letters concerning them, Mr. Thrale, who had seemed to be recovering, died suddenly at the house which he had taken for his family in Grosvenor Square; and Johnson, as his custom was, sought society for the purpose of mitigating his grief and preventing himself from melancholy brooding over it.

A week before Thrale's death there had been a gay dinner party at the house. A note written by Mrs. Thrale to Madame d'Arblay was endorsed by the recipient. "Written a few hours after the death of Mr. Thrale, which happened by a sudden stroke of apoplexy on the morning of a day on which half the fashion of London had been invited to an assembly at his house."

Dr. Johnson had been called to him on the previous night, and found him insensible and convulsed. He remained in the room to attend him all night, except that he twice visited Mrs. Thrale. As Thrale's executor, he took great delight in going about with pen and ink, making estimates and inventories at the brewery, which had to be sold, and signing cheques for considerable amounts, in connection with the disposal "not of so many vats and casks, but of the potentiality of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice." Almost immediately after her husband's death, Mrs. Thrale hurried to Streatham, and thence to Brighton and to Bath. Johnson had much to do as executor; and he had none but grateful memories and sincere grief for the friend whom he had lost. At seventy-one years of age a premonition of loneliness and of desertion seemed to trouble him. His letters to Mrs. Thrale were often plaintive in their expressions of continued regard and anxious solicitude for her welfare and that of her daughter, but as time went on he seemed to perceive that her answers were irregular, and often displayed little sincerity of sentiment. The

sentiment seemed to have been exhausted, and, in fact, there was a reason for her apparent lapse of regard, for it soon became known that she was contemplating re-marriage. She had accepted Mr. Thrale chiefly at her mother's instance, because it was a good match, and she had become aware that he proposed to her after having run the gauntlet of some other young ladies, who refused to live in the house by the brewery at Southwark. Her agreement to do so had secured him.

As he left her an ample fortune, she now determined to marry according to her own inclination. Piozzi, she said, was a gentleman, which Thrale had not been, and there seem to have been few or no obstacles to her becoming his wife, except the well-founded anticipation of the opposition of Dr. Johnson. That was not to stand in the way. She continued the correspondence with the Doctor, but did not send for him to stay at Streatham as she had formerly done, though his solitude eventually impelled him to give imploring suggestions that she should renew those invitations. In truth, he was lonely enough, for the inmates of his house, the recipients of his bounty, were no longer with him: Levett was dead, and Mrs. Williams, after long lingering in pain and weakness, had been carried to the grave. Madame Desmoulins and her daughter had departed to dwell elsewhere, Goldsmith, Garrick, Beauclerk, and others of his early and attached friends, were no longer heard in the once convivial circle of wit and learning, and the attempt to form a club in Ivy Lane of respectable

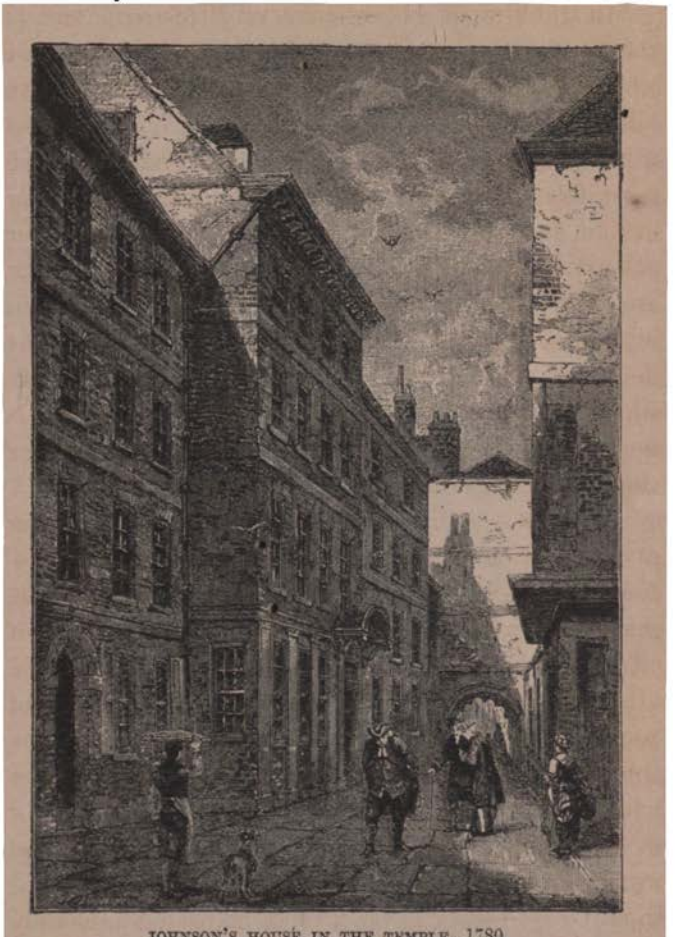
men who were not politicians met with but little success.

In thinking of the meetings at Streatham, and of the bright, chattering, somewhat heartless little lady who kept them alive till her great friend appeared to kindle them into flame, Johnson may have recalled with bitterness his own keen observation, "The most fatal disease of friendship is gradual decay or dislike, hourly increased by causes too slender for complaint and too numerous for removal. Those who are angry may be reconciled, those who have been injured may receive a recompense, but when the desire of pleasing and willingness to be pleased are silently diminished the renovation of friendship is hopeless, as when the vital powers sink into languor there is no longer any use of the physician."

Johnson's reply to the announcement of her marriage—before she was really married to Piozzi—contained, as she probably expected it would contain, some reflections at which she could profess sufficient offence to sever the friendship which had lasted a quarter of a century; and the wise old man who had been her adviser, teacher, familiar correspondent, and the confidential referee of the family, would have been left to the solitude he dreaded and deplored, but for more faithful friends, who visited him to the last, and were with him or near him on that night of cold and snow, December 12th, 1784, when he passed peacefully away.

The procession of mourning coaches, bearing those who followed his remains to Westminster Abbey,

made a gloomy spectacle in the Highway of Letters. About fifty of those who had loved him and honoured



JOHNSON'S HOUSE IN THE TEMPLE, 1780.

his memory took part in the solemn observance, and among them were Burke, Reynolds, Hoole, Sir Joseph

Banks, Malone, Stephens, Dr. Burney, Ryland, and other representative men. The faithful Langton, who had taken a lodging near Bolt Court that he might attend his friend, was there and was one of the six pall-bearers.

We read of an earlier date when Johnson was writing sermons for his friend, the Rev. John Taylor, LL.D., of Ashbourne, who had told him that he should be his heir, but of whom he said to Reynolds, "Sir, I love him, but I do not love him more; my regard for him does not increase. As it is said in the Apocrypha, 'his talk is of bullocks' (Ecclus. xxxviii. 25). I do not suppose he is very fond of my company. His habits are by no means sufficiently clerical: this he knows that I see; and no man likes to live under the eye of perpetual disapprobation."

Dr. Taylor outlived Johnson, and it was he who performed the mournful office of reading the funeral service over the body of his friend in Westminster Abbey.

Dr. Johnson had lived for the greater part of his life in various places in and off Fleet Street—in Fetter Lane, Boswell Court, Gough Square, Inner Temple Lane, Johnson's Court, and Bolt Court. Boswell Court and Johnson's Court had not been named after the Doctor or his biographer. The former was so called from Boswell House, the abode of a Mr. Boswell in the time of Elizabeth, and its site was built upon in 1614. Lady Raleigh, widow of Sir Walter, lived there, and later the Lord Chief Justice and Lady Lyttelton, and Lady and Sir Richard Fanshawe, the

latter famous in the World of Letters, and as an ambassador of Charles I. Johnson was always diverted by the notion of living in a court with his own name, and while in the Hebrides called himself "Johnson of that ilk."

Among the pleasantest recollections of Dr. Johnson are those of his delight in watering the garden of his house in Bolt Court, and of his devout participation in Divine service at the church of St. Clement Danes', where his seat was in the north gallery, near the pulpit.

The house in Bolt Court was occupied after Johnson's death by Mr. Allen, a printer, who was succeeded by Mr. Bensley. Contrary to representations made in various descriptive paragraphs in professed accounts of the locality, Mr. Bensley neither made alterations in the house, nor impaired its interest by improvements, till, in 1817, some repairs to the structure and a new roof had become absolutely necessary. There had been a fire which injured the premises in 1807, but it had not reached the rooms formerly occupied by Dr. Johnson. In 1819, however, another and more disastrous fire totally destroyed the building. The family of Mr. Bensley, who had owned and resided in it from the time when his father succeeded to it, sold the freehold of what had been the site of four houses and a large garden to the Stationers' Company, who afterwards built their school there.

We have seen how the early printers in Fleet Street—who were also booksellers and publishers—

were affected by the establishment of the Stationers' Company, which retained some of its monopolies or privileges for many years, and its claims to demand the right of participating in the publishing of books for which it had granted a license. These claims dwindled during the growth and extended freedom of the press, until they covered little except the right of registering and the monopoly of publishing astrological almanacks. We also note that the business of the printer and that of the bookseller or publisher were separated, and even in the early part of the eighteenth century the publisher or bookseller often insisted on the author bearing the expense, or part of the expense, of printing, which was one reason for the necessity of seeking for a patron who would make the author a handsome present as an acknowledgment of a flattering dedication.

The number of printers, as well as of booksellers, vastly increased, and their businesses extended to various parts of London, though Fleet Street was still the representative centre. The art of printing had declined at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but revived long before its close; and William Bowyer, whose printing office occupied the former site of the George tavern, where Bradbury and Agnew's large establishment now stands, was the man who raised the reputation of the typographical art in England His premises were destroyed by fire in 1712, but his friends helped him to rebuild, and he and his partner and successor continued the business. His son, William Bowyer, was

author as well as printer, and became a partner. The names of Nichols—who moved from Whitefriars to Red Lion Passage—of his son, John Bowyer Nichols, and of John Baskerville, occur to us as those of the men who restored printing to the rank of a fine art, while the booksellers and publishers became so numerous, even in Fleet Street and the neighbourhood, that we should have to refer to the eccentric Dunton's Autobiography to enumerate them and their peculiar personal characteristics.

But while the publication and sale of books were vastly increasing in the Highway of Letters, periodical literature and the newspaper press were increasing also—slowly at first, but soon with great rapidity. It must be remembered that when Johnson wrote for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and dined behind a screen because he was too shabby to appear before Cave's guest at the house at St. John's Gate, there were practically no newspapers such as we are familiar with. The information they contained was meagre. No reporter was allowed to take notes of the debates in Parliament, and Johnson, who wrote reports of the proceedings under the title of "Debates in the Senate of Lilliput," invented the speeches—that is to say, he knew who would be the speaker and what would be the subject, and wrote accordingly, giving the member the benefit of his fluent and emphatic language. It was a breach of privilege to make known in print anything that transpired in Parliament, but reporters with accurate memories were employed, and the debates in an abbreviated form were printed. In

1771 Lord Onslow denounced the printers of these meagre reports, but Burke defended them, saying that as long as there was an interest out of doors to examine the proceedings of Parliament, so long would men be found to do what those men had done. Several London printers were summoned to the bar of the House. Those who appeared asked pardon on their knees and were discharged. Officers were despatched to arrest those who had not surrendered, but the defaulters were on the City side of Temple Bar, and the Parliamentary officers were themselves arrested and brought before the City justices for outraging the privileges of the City of London. Cited before the bar of the House of Commons, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen pleaded that their charter protected the citizens from any law process being served on them except by their own officer. They were committed to the Tower, but at the end of the session the power of the House to imprison ceased.

The release of the City dignitaries was hailed with a popular demonstration, their carriages were drawn through the streets, and the City was illuminated. While they were in the Tower the Lord Mayor and Aldermen had been visited by many of the political leaders and noblemen of the day. There was no longer any punishment inflicted for publication of debates in the House of Commons, but no actual permission was given to anyone to report the proceedings, and it was done under considerable difficulties. The *Times* and other papers of a century ago were

still without any but the most abbreviated accounts of Parliamentary procedure. Even the speeches of the most eloquent and prominent members were not reported, and the account of the trial of Warren Hastings was but an imperfect abstract. At a Whig dinner the toast of the "Liberty of the Press" was first given in 1795, at the Crown and Anchor, the famous tavern for political assemblies, at the corner of Arundel Street, just beyond Temple Bar. Fleet Street was rapidly becoming the Highway of Letters in a new sense. Newspapers multiplied, in spite of the serious "taxes on knowledge" with which they were burdered. Till a date well within the present century, laws were enforced rather for the repression than the encouragement of journalism and the newspaper press. Rags, the raw material of which paper was made, if imported from foreign countries, had to bear a considerable duty. Paper itself bore a heavy excise duty. A tax of fourpence was placed on every newspaper sold. To ensure that the Treasury should have the first pick of any money made by newspaper enterprises, a duty of three-and-sixpence was charged for every advertisement, whether it occupied two lines or a page. The consequence was that advertisements were few, newspapers small and dear, the circulation, even among the reading class, was limited; one paper did duty for a considerable circle of readers, and when done with in town was sent into the country, so that "news" there was a month old before the next "mail" contradicted or confirmed it. Not till 1833, and after persistent and strenuous efforts, did

the advocates of a free press succeed in getting the advertisement duty reduced to one-and-sixpence. Three years afterwards the Government stamp on each paper was reduced from fourpence to a penny.

Before that time there were but 400 newspapers in the United Kingdom, and only about twelve of them were published daily. There are now above 2,200, of which 470 are published in London, and 180 are daily newspapers. Fleet Street is full of the representative journals of the world's daily history and daily interests. Along the entire length of this ancient and renowned thoroughfare, and in every street and alley branching therefrom, the names of familiar publications appear upon the house fronts. Not only London, but provincial, newspapers seem to have unfurled their banners outside the successive storeys. Except in the vast buildings occupied by the chief London dailies and weeklies, there is often a strange community of interests represented under one roof. Church and stage have long been identified as companions, and therefore it is less startling to see Divinity and the prize-ring, æsthetics and poultry-farming, the majesty of the law and the libellous defiance of it, the operations of mammon and the claims of benevolence, romance and realism, political economy and philanthropy, anæsthetics and athletics, the rights of labour and the laws of lawn tennis, business and bicycling, dogs and the drama—all represented by golden legends, or more or less conspicuous inscriptions across the house fronts, or by the newly-printed sheets issuing from the narrow doorways.

CHAPTER XX.

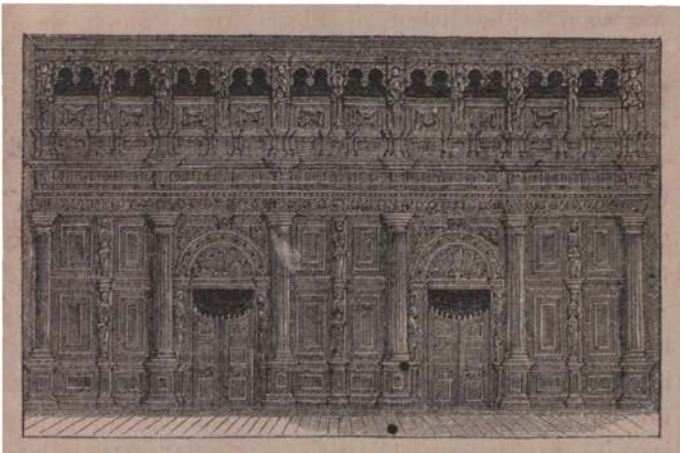
SUCCESSORS OF DR. JOHNSON—CHARLES LAMB.

Carlyle's Portrait of Lamb—Brother and Sister—Hoole—"Omniscient Jackson"—Benchers of the Temple—Charles and Mary Lamb in Crown Office Row—The School in Fetter Lane—Mr. Starkey—At Large in a Library—The Temple Burial Ground—Christ's Hospital—Coleridge—Poverty—Needlework—The Shadow of a Boy's Love—William and Dorothy Wordsworth—Hazlitt—The Lambs in Chancery Lane—In Mitre Court Buildings—Supper Parties—Godwin Dyer—Crabbe Robinson—Holcroft—Barry Cornwall—Inner Temple Lane—Mary Lamb as a Teacher and Adviser—Emma Isola—Haydon—Keats—Ritchie—Tom Hood—Keats' Lodging in Cheapside—Leigh Hunt—A Narrowing Circle—Edmonton—De Quincey's Estimate of Lamb—Lamb's Contribution to Newspapers—The *Examiner*—Leigh Hunt in Prison—His Visitors—Byron—Scott—Murray.

With the death of Doctor Johnson an era in the World of Letters may be said to have closed, and after that period, as we have seen, the development of the periodical and newspaper press began to effect some change in the aspect of Fleet Street, where there were fewer literary residents. Even before the shadow of the great loss had fallen upon the Highway of Fleet Street, men of letters, like men of commerce, had made their dwellings further towards the west of London, or in the near suburbs.

Around Whitefriars and within the Temple there were still representatives of literature and learning other than the benchers and students of the law. The footsteps of the members of the Kit-Kat Club had not ceased to sound in the great highway before the feet of their successors—of Hogarth, Johnson,

Garrick, Burke, Goldsmith, Reynolds, Hawkesworth, Langton, Beauclerk, Richardson, Fielding, Churchill were heard there; and the dull rumble of the mourning coaches at Johnson's funeral had scarcely subsided when Crabbe, who years before had been starving in London, till he left a letter and some verses at Burke's door, and so roused the generous heart of



SCREEN OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE HALL.

that brilliant orator, came to the front rank in the World of Letters, though he remained in retirement as a country parson in the living to which Burke's influence had introduced him. It was to Johnson that Burke submitted Crabbe's early poems, and he selected "The Library" as the first to be published.

Jeremy Bentham was then becoming conspicuous, and Cowper, the mentally afflicted recluse, who had been a Templar, and was known in the coffee-houses in Fleet Street, was writing the sanest and most

accurate and melodious verse, and much of it was strongly indicative of a mental and moral fibre which occasional periods of deepest depression and melancholy aberration had not ravelled. Campbell was about to write the "Pleasures of Hope." The distant patter of gathering feet—the footsteps of a new generation in the World of Letters—was soon to be heard in Fleet Street, which was, as we have noted, drawing towards it, as an intellectual centre, all those who sought a place in the ideal Highway of Letters. The mere list of names of those who were, thenceforth to the present times, to be known therein as belonging to the ever-expanding Circle of Literature, would occupy more pages than remain to this record.

Only a few of such frequenters of Fleet Street as may be said to represent the literary and journalistic life that surges through the Highway of Letters—the figures which have been most familiar there, as associated chiefly with the periodical literature of the century—can arrest our attention.

The successor to Dr. Johnson who most intimately represents Fleet Street was born in the Temple; and when the sage of Bolt Court died was nine years old, and wore the yellow coat, the buckle shoes, and blue gown of the scholars at Christ's Hospital. Then, and some time afterwards, when he had grown to man's estate, his crisp, curly dark hair, his striking aquiline features, his lustrous glittering eyes, made him remarkable, in spite of his frail, thin, and undersized figure, just as the quality and significant wit

of his speech was striking and attractive, in spite of hesitation and frequent stammer.

Could there have been a stranger contrast than that between him and Johnson?

Here is a sketch of him—a rude and disparaging sketch by Carlyle, who was no more capable of appreciating his delicate and subtle humour and refined seriousness than of estimating the sentimental heart-hunger of a woman. "He was the leanest of mankind, tiny black breeches buttoned to the knee-cap, and no farther, surmounting spindle legs, also in black; face and head fineish, black, bony, lean, and of a Jew type rather; in the eyes a kind of smoky brightness, or confused sharpness; spoke with a stutter; in walking tottered and shuffled."

Such is the portrait of Charles Lamb in his later days, as depicted by the author of "Sartor Resartus" and "Latter-day Pamphlets," who, in his impenetrable literary arrogance, spoke of the author of the delightful, genial, quaint "Essays of Elia," as "a poor creature."

Such, however, was not the opinion of Lamb's other contemporaries—of Coleridge, Wordsworth, Hazlitt, Talfourd, Southey, Leigh Hunt—nor has it been the estimate at which a countless multitude of readers of Lamb's contributions to the World of Letters have arrived. Lamb's was an emotional nature, allied to a singular steadfastness of affection, shown by daily acts of tenderness, and a life of unselfish devotion to the sister whose love and care for him in his infancy he repaid by assiduous protec-

tion when the fits of mental aberration from which she periodically suffered made it necessary for him to undertake a charge for which he considered her gentle companionship and intelligent assistance in the longer

OLD HALL OF THE INNER TEMPLE.

intervals of sanity were an inestimable recompense. The story of Charles Lamb's tender devotion to his sister Mary, the affecting picture of those two forlorn, weeping creatures walking hand-in-hand across the fields to Islington, when the brother was obliged to convey his afflicted sister to the asylum in which she was temporarily placed, is one of the most affecting in the whole range of literary biography.

Charles Lamb must have known Mr. Hoole, the clerk in the India-house, who was a proficient Italian scholar, and translated Ariosto. And he probably also knew the young clergyman of the same name who sought to obtain the Readership of the Temple, and in whose behalf Dr. Johnson wrote to Mr. Richard Jackson in 1783. This is the Mr. Jackson who is described in Lamb's charming essay on the "Old Benchers of the Inner Temple." He was called "Omniscient Jackson" (a sobriquet altered by Johnson from a feeling of reverence, to "All-knowing").

Bentham speaks of him as "a silk gownsman, who had never any business, but who went by the name of Omniscient Jackson." Lamb, in his essay, says:—"He had the reputation of possessing more multifarious knowledge than any man of his time. He was the Friar Bacon of the less literate portion of the Temple. I remember a pleasant passage of the cook applying to him, with much formality of apology, for instructions how to write down *edge* bone of beef in his bill of commons. He was supposed to know, if any man in the world did. He decided the orthography to be as I have given it, justifying his authority with such anatomical reasons as dismissed the manciple (for the time) learned and happy."

In those charming essays which Elia gave to the new world of letters, we are indirectly made acquainted with the family of the author; and his sister Mary Lamb, in her occasional tales and letters, added to the traits which make us familiar with her relatives

under other names. In her "Mrs. Leicester's School," and other stories, as in her brother's essays, we come upon the early associations of the Lambs. Their father (Lovel, in the "Benchers of the Inner Temple") had, after serious struggles, become clerk to Mr. Salt, one of the Benchers, and lived in Crown Office Row, where Charles and Mary were born—Mary in 1764 and Charles in 1775. Mary was the third and Charles the youngest of seven children, all of whom died in infancy except these two and an elder brother John, who was spoiled and petted as a child, and grew up to be selfish, indifferent, looking to the feathering of his own nest, and showing little or no sympathy for the brother and sister who had to bear their own trials in a world of their own. In her early years Mary went to a day-school in Fetter Lane, kept by a Mr. William Bird, where boys were taught in the morning and girls in the afternoon, by an elderly usher named Starkey; but perhaps her real education, and by no means the best possible for a child with the tendency to mental disturbance which afterwards manifested itself, was desultory reading in the library of her father's employer, where certain books on witchcraft and martyrology attracted her attention, as they afterwards did that of her brother Charles. She must almost certainly have been acquainted with the appearance of Doctor Johnson in Fleet Street, and probably with that of Goldsmith, who died when she was ten years, and her little brother not quite a year, old. Was his grave in the burial ground of the Temple one of those which they visited when the little boy,

holding his protecting sister's hand, went into the Temple gardens and thence to read the inscriptions on the old sundial and the tomb-stones, with the adulatory epitaphs, which set Charles wondering "where all the naughty people were buried?"

Charles, as we have seen, was sent to "the Blue-coat School," where Samuel Taylor Coleridge, afterwards his close and constant friend, was already a lonely, friendless, dreamy, studious boy, half starved on the weekly holidays, when he had no one to visit, and so spent the time either in bathing in the New River or haunting old book-stalls.

Charles Lamb left Christ's Hospital when he was fifteen. His father's mental faculties were failing, his mother was an invalid, and Mary had the burden of the family cares, added to the necessity for contributing to the income by indefatigable work as a milliner. For eleven years she maintained herself by the needle. Charles obtaining a clerkship in the South Sea House, and two years afterwards a better one in the India House, added to the family resources. In 1795 the father, incapable of continuing his employment, was obliged to relinquish his situation, receiving a small pension, and the family then removed to poor lodgings in Little Queen Street, Holborn. There Charles formed a deep attachment, of which little is known, except by the references to Alice W—— in his Essays, and either his untoward circumstances or other obstacles to his suit, so wrought on his brain that for six weeks his reason was impaired, and he had to be confined in an asylum. But he quickly recovered,

and was able even, in the lucid intervals of that short period, to write some charming and accurately modulated verse to the sister who had been throughout his trouble his best and most faithful friend. Coleridge, who, while he was at Cambridge, had frequently come up to London and visited the Lambs at the Temple, was now at Bristol with Southey, and was about to be married. He continued to correspond affectionately with Lamb, who turned to him for comfort and sympathy in the dreadful tragedy following his sister Mary's sudden attack of frenzy. He could have had no better or more permanently sympathetic human consoler than Coleridge, and their correspondence led to Lamb being able soon to discuss a proposal for the friends to join in publishing some poems which they had written.

SUNDIAL IN THE TEMPLE.

Lamb took a lodging for his father and himself at Pentonville, and a delightful fortnight's visit to Coleridge, who was then married, and lived at Nether Stowey, was the brightest incident in his life. There

he met Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy, who became his life-long friends.

Lamb was but twenty-two, still little more than a boy, with curling hair, and wild, lambent eyes; Wordsworth was twenty-seven, Coleridge twenty-five; Wordsworth, with a solemn, stately look on his face, with eyes that were "fires half-smouldering, half-burning, inspired, supernatural, with a fixed aerial gaze as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance. His mouth had expression of an inclination to uncontrollable laughter." Hazlitt has described him in his picturesque style, and speaks of his recital of one of his poems when his voice lingered in the ear like the roll of spent thunder. It is Dorothy Wordsworth who describes Coleridge —at that time pale, thin, with a wide mouth and thick lips, longish, loose-growing, half-curling, rough, black hair, his eye large, full, grey, speaking every emotion of his animated mind; fine dark eyebrows, and over-hanging forehead.

The friendship of Coleridge and Lamb had to subsist on correspondence, and very little of that, while the author of "The Ancient Mariner" was in Germany, and Lamb's condition was changing. He grew mature, and his literary faculty was more developed.

After the death of his father and the recovery of Mary, who now had only temporary recurrences of the malady, he took his beloved sister home, and she soon began to write a little, and to help him much by her gentle companionship; she, who was often sparing of

speech, so to speak "hung upon his lips," and often replied to him by repeating what he said.

"You must die first, Mary."

"Yes, Charles, I must die first," was one example of her brief rejoinders. Mary had now such long intervals of complete sanity that she and her devoted brother went to live in lodgings in the house of Mr. Gretch, an old "Blue-coat boy," in Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane. It was here that Mary so recovered as to be able not only to write, but to visit literary friends, and to entertain guests, notably Coleridge, who was again visiting London.

They remained only for a few months in Southampton Buildings before removing to No. 16, Mitre Court Buildings, in the Temple. There they may be said to have kept open house, and at their frugal, plain, but attractive suppers, Godwin, George Dyer, Crabbe Robinson, Holcroft, Hazlitt, and a literary circle which included half of the best known wayfarers of the Highway of Letters, gathered, to talk and to listen to Lamb's quaint, piquant humour, which was so mingled with out-of-the-way knowledge that it was as attractive in matter as it was in manner, and Barry Cornwall used to say that his "pleasant little stammer was just enough to prevent his making speeches; just enough to make you listen eagerly for his words."

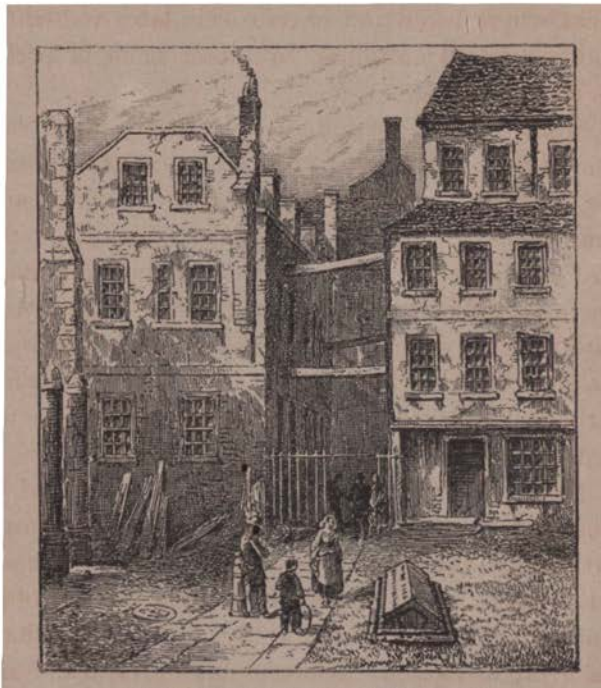
William Hazlitt, the brilliant essayist and admirable critic of art, literature and the drama, lived in Southampton Buildings, and his wife and he were great friends of Mary and Charles Lamb. Hazlitt spoke with enthusiasm of the delight of listening to

Charles when he could be drawn out by the friends who gathered round him at the plainly furnished rooms in Mitre Court Buildings, and there is sufficient testimony of the pleasure of these frugal entertainments, where bread and cheese, or in later and better times, a joint of mutton or "a winter hand of pork," was the homely fare.

From Mitre Court the Lambs had to turn out, because their landlord wanted the rooms for himself. The next residence was at No. 4, Inner Temple Lane. Lamb wrote to Coleridge, "I have two rooms on the third floor, and five rooms above, with an inner staircase to myself, and all new painted, etc., for £30 a year. The rooms are delicious, and the best look backward into Hare Court, where there is a pump always going; just now it is dry. Hare Court trees come in at the window, so that it's like living in a garden."

There was mostly a fine flavour of wit and of intelligent literary conversation at Lamb's simple parties; his own quaint vein of mingled seriousness and humour, which was sometimes caustic and often mingled with droll personal allusion, being perhaps the great attraction. Some of his extravagant and abrupt sallies of jesting were the result of his unremitting observation of his sister, and the desire to prevent her from entering upon topics which would be too emotional or too profound for her mental health. But she was distinguished by a beautiful calm of manner, and was one of the tenderest and wisest advisers, especially to the young, and she undertook the teaching of several young friends after she and

her brother had adopted the orphan, Emma Isola, who became Mrs. Moxon. There can be no doubt, however, that Charles Lamb had a tendency to extravagant drollery, which may have had some relation



"GOLDSMITH'S TOMB" IN 1860 (*p.* 455).

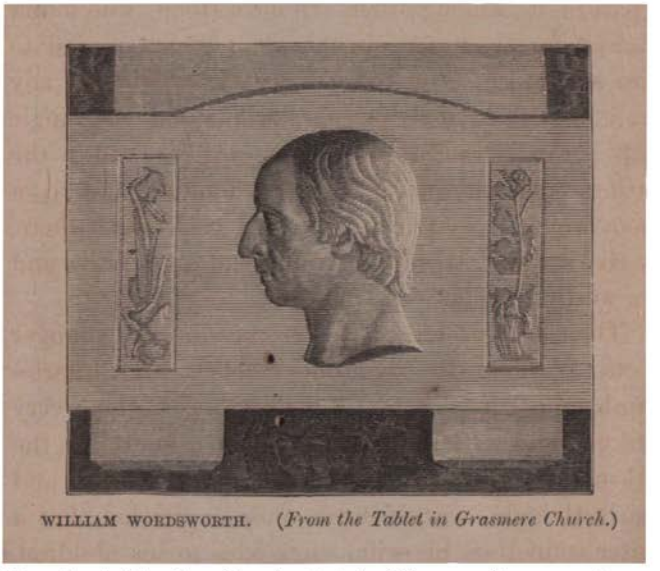
to an inherited tendency to insanity. He used sometimes to attack Wordsworth with persiflage which the poet received with honest laughter. He knew well and loved well "Lamb the frolic and the gentle," and understood his erratic wit. Haydon, the painter, speaking of a dinner which he gave in

his studio to Wordsworth, Lamb, Keats, and Ritchie the traveller, says that Lamb's fun in the midst of Wordsworth's solemn intonation of oratory was like the sarcasm and art of the fool in the midst of Lear's passion. Reminiscences of meetings at Lamb's lodgings of the literary and artistic circle have appeared in the words of several of those who formed a part of it; among others Thomas Hood, who found himself for the first time at a door which opened to him as frankly as its master's heart, for without any preliminaries of hall, passage, or parlour, one single step across the threshold brought him into the sitting-room and in sight of the domestic hearth, a room which looked brown with old books, and where, by the fire, sat Wordsworth and his sister, Elia and the worthy Bridget.

Their palaver was of the promise of the younger poets, Wordsworth favouring Shelley, and Charles Lamb supporting Keats. But there was nothing very striking, and as Hood says, "A poet cannot, like the girl in the fairy tale, be always talking diamonds and pearls, though it is no uncommon impression that a writer sonnetises his wife, sings odes to his children, talks songs and epigrams to his friends, and reviews his servants." Hood adds that it was something in this spirit that an official gentleman to whom he mentioned the pleasant literary meetings at Lamb's associated them instantly with his parochial mutual-instruction evening schools, and remarked "Yes, yes; all very proper and praiseworthy—of course you go there to *improve your minds.*'

It was probably at this time that poor Keats, already with premonition of his early death, lodged on the second floor of a house stretching over a passage leading to the Queen's Arms Tavern, in Cheapside, where he wrote his sonnet on Chapman's "Homer," and several of his poems.

The mention of Shelley leads us to that close



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. (*From the Tablet in Grasmere Church.*)

friend of Charles Lamb, Leigh Hunt, whose eminent achievements in the World of Letters extended to another generation, and link the story of the Highway of Letters, in the days, or, rather, the nights, before it was lighted by gas, to the present time, when some of them who knew him well see it illuminated by electricity. In some of his delightful verse, Hunt records, with playful grace a visit from the Lambs (brother

and sister), who were not only vigorous, or, at all events, untiring walkers, but frequently disregarded inclement weather when they had determined to seek the society of a friend.

Born in 1784, Hunt lived till 1859. Cheerfulness, exercise in the open air, and moderation in eating

THE CLOISTERS OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL. (*From a View published in* 1804.)

and drinking, kept him not only healthy, but with a youthful vigour, activity, and vivacity which are conspicuous in his varied and numerous works. He also was a scholar at Christ's Hospital, but a little later than Coleridge and Lamb, and the quality of his own work was such as to enable him to appreciate the exquisite fancies of those essays of Elia which first appeared in *The Indicator*, under his editorship.

Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, was amongst

the later friends of Lamb, and was a frequent correspondent, and the number of their acquaintances increased, so that the constant accession of visitors became injurious to the brother as well as to the sister. Their warm regard for their friends led them to welcome them at times when their own need of

THE WESTERN QUADRANGLE OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL, ABOUT 1780.

repose was so urgent that to entertain company was a difficult and almost a dangerous indulgence. Among their later friends were Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Novello and their daughter, afterwards Mrs. Cowden Clarke, whose recollections of Charles and Mary Lamb are singularly interesting.

From the Temple they went to lodge in Russell Street, taking another lodging at Dalston, but the change was not beneficial, for the callers kept them in a fever of excitement, and Lamb, though fighting

against the craving, too frequently gave way to excess in gin-and-water, porter, and other liquors, in company of acquaintances who waylaid him that he might invite them to drink.

The next move was to Colebrook Cottage, Islington, and thence, after a summer lodging at Enfield, and a temporary return to Southampton Buildings, in a futile effort to resume London life, they went to board and lodge at Edmonton with a Mr. and Mrs Walden, who received patients, Mary Lamb suffering such frequent relapses as to make such an arrangement necessary.

The early friends were passing away. Hazlitt, the brilliant, gifted, slovenly essayist and artist, had died. The old Fleet Street circle was narrowing. Coleridge, with failing powers, had apparently wrenched himself free from the degrading indulgence in opium, and lay dying at the house of Mr. Gillman, the surgeon, at Highgate. His death was almost the last blow for Charles Lamb, who soon after succumbed to the effects of a fall, which apparently had caused him little injury. This was in 1834, only about a month after Coleridge's death. Mary survived him for several years, with recurrent periods of insanity, living till 1847, and there was no one to succeed her brother as a resident representative of literature in the Highway of Letters, though some eminent writers have dwelt in chambers in the Temple. Talfourd, who became a judge, was known there rather as a member of the bar than as an author and dramatist, and one of the most

appreciative of the friends of Elia. There were numerous expressions of affection and admiration for the memory of the devoted brother and sincere and kindly friend, whose heart was ever ready to alleviate distress, and whose generosity, even when he was struggling with poverty, was declared by de Quincey to have been no less than princely in its unselfish readiness to alleviate the necessities of others who appealed to him when they were in debt or difficulty.

Lamb's connection with the newspaper press, and his own humorous account of the vicissitudes of periodicals, and of those contributors who were retained to make jokes or write paragraphs of personal interest, at so much a piece—an office which he for some time fulfilled—suggest some of the conditions of the periodicals of his time; and we have already seen what even a favourable estimate of the sources of income of a newspaper included. It would be too much to say that there was no instance of complete "liberty of the Press," but it was a taxed and burdened Press, and its conditions, and the necessity for seeking information from political leaders, rendered a prominent journal peculiarly liable to be subsidised by the statesmen or the party by whom it was "inspired."

The letters of Junius, the libels in Wilkes' *North Briton*, and Cobbett's plain speaking in the *Register*, were efforts for emancipation from the thraldom of Government prosecution as a punishment for the exposure of abuses; but not sufficient distinction was made between outspoken censure and scandalous

invective. The punishments were often severe, and they were tolerated, not necessarily because the statements for which they were inflicted were untrue, but because they were expressed in scurrilous language.

It is singularly suggestive that the toast which afterwards became so famous—"The Liberty of the Press! it is like the air we breathe, if we have it not we die"—was first given in 1795 at a Whig dinner at the Crown and Anchor tavern, which stood at the corner of Arundel Street, beyond Temple Bar. James Henry Leigh Hunt, and his brother, John, worked for the establishment of that liberty in their *Examiner*, a journal which became of sufficient power and importance to make their attacks on the Prince Regent somewhat alarming, especially when they called him "a fat Adonis of fifty," and animadverted on his excesses. Two years' imprisonment and a fine of £500 each was the sentence pronounced on the intrepid proprietors, who were also the editors, and to prison they went. But the *Examiner* continued to be published, and Leigh Hunt, in Horsemonger Lane Gaol, had a multitude of sympathisers, and became popular, while he received numerous distinguished visitors from the World of Letters and its Highway, among them—Byron, Keats, Shelley, and Moore, whom he entertained in his prison room, which he had transformed by having the wall papered with a pattern of roses upon a trellis, and where he had growing plants and flowers, beside his pictures and his piano. He had even converted a small,

sordid yard into a tiny garden, and amidst these triumphs of adaptation he waited the expiration of his sentence with cheerful equanimity and a genial toleration of those to whom he was opposed in opinion.

The friendly relations which Hunt had long sustained with Byron and Shelley, and his visit to them in Italy, did not prevent him from afterwards writing pretty plainly about the author of "Don Juan," of whom, in a vivid word picture, he said:—

"Lord Byron's face was handsome, eminently so in some respects. He had a mouth and chin fit for Apollo; and when I first knew him there were both lightness and energy all over his aspect. But his countenance did not improve with age, and there were always some defects in it—the jaw was too big for the upper part. It had all the wilfulness of a despot in it. The animal predominated over the intellectual part of his head, inasmuch as the face altogether was large in proportion to the skull. The eyes were set too near one another; and the nose, though handsome in itself, had the appearance, when you saw it closely in front, of being grafted on the face rather than growing properly out of it.

"His person was very handsome, though terminating in lameness, and tending to fat and effeminacy; which makes me remember what a hostile fair one objected to him, namely, that he had little beard, a fault which, on the other hand, was thought by another lady, not hostile, to add to the divinity of his aspect,—*imberbis Apollo.* His lameness was only in one foot, the left; and it was so little visible to casual notice, that as he lounged about a room (which he did in such a manner as to screen it) it was hardly perceivable. But it was a real, and even a sore, lameness. Much walking upon it fevered and hurt it. It was a shrunken foot, a little twisted. This defect unquestionably mortified him exceedingly, and helped to put sarcasm and misanthropy into his taste of life.

"He had a delicate white hand, of which he was proud; and he attracted attention to it by rings. He thought a hand of this description almost the only mark remaining now-a-days of a gentleman, of which it certainly is not, nor of a lady either, hough a coarse one

implies handiwork. He often appeared holding a handkerchief, upon which his jewelled fingers lay embedded as in a picture. He was as fond of fine linen as a Quaker, and had the remnant of his hair oiled and trimmed with all the anxiety of a Sardanapalus. The visible character to which this effeminacy gave rise appears to have indicated itself as early as his travels in the Levant, where the Grand Signior is said to have taken him for a woman in disguise.

"But he had tastes of a more masculine description. He was fond of swimming to the last, and used to push out to a good distance in the gulph of Genoa. He was also a good horseman; and he liked to have a great dog or two about him, which is not a habit observable in timid men. Yet I doubt greatly whether he was a man of courage. I suspect that personal anxiety, coming upon a constitution unwisely treated, had no small hand in hastening his death in Greece.

"The story of his bold behaviour at sea in a voyage to Sicily, and of Mr. Shelley's timidity, is just reversing what I conceive would have been the real state of the matter, had the voyage taken place. The account is an impudent fiction. Nevertheless, he volunteered voyages by sea, when he might have eschewed them; and yet the same man never got into a coach without being afraid. In short, he was the contradiction his father and mother had made him. To lump together some more of his personal habits, in the style of old Aubrey, he spelt affectedly, swore somewhat, had the Northumbrian burr in his speech, did not like to see women eat, and would merrily say that he had another reason for not liking to dine with them—which was, that they always had the wings of the chicken."

Byron and Sir Walter Scott were often enough in Fleet Street (as, in fact, every wayfarer in the London World of Letters is bound to resort thither at one time or other); but it does not appear that they first met at Mr. Murray's, the publishers, in the shop and reception room over the entrance to Falcon Court, but in the grander and more luxuriously furnished salon of the premises to which, in 1812, the famous publishers removed, in Albemarle Street. For more than a century the house of Murray has been famous, and its third representative, who died but recently, in his

eighty-fourth year, had long before written his reminiscences, in which he says:—

"I can recollect seeing Lord Byron in Albemarle Street. He wore many rings on his fingers and a brooch in his shirt-front, which was embroidered. When he called he used to be dressed in a black dress-coat (as we should now call it), with grey, and sometimes nankeen, trousers, his shirt open at the neck. Lord Byron's deformity in his foot was very evident, especially as he walked downstairs. After Scott and he had ended their conversation in the drawing-room, it was a curious sight to see the two greatest poets of the age—both lame—stumping downstairs side by side."

WIG SHOP IN THE MIDDLE TEMPLE.

CHAPTER XXI.

A TRANSITION IN THE HIGHWAY OF LETTERS.

Scurrilous Papers—*The Age*—The *Satirist*—Westmacott—Gregory—*The Town*—"Baron" Nicholson—The *John Bull*—Theodore Hook—Ingoldsby—Rogers—Second Editions—The *Courier*—Charles Knight—His Epitaph by Jerrold—Charles Dickens—"Pickwick"—"Oliver Twist"—Changing Aspects of London—*Household Words*—*Punch*—Mark Lemon—The Shakspeare's Head—The Mayhews—The *Punch* Staff—Leech—Albert Smith—Maginn—The New Timon—Tennyson *versus* Bulwer Lytton, in *Punch*—Thackeray—Gus Mayhew's Introduction to the *Illustrated London News*—Douglas Jerrold—*Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*—The "Train-band"—Mr. G. A. Sala—The Savage Club—*Fun* and its Staff—Tom Robertson—Henry S. Leigh—Henry Byron—William Jeffery Prowse—W. S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan—Mr. Clement Scott—Mr. J. Ashby-Sterry—John Crawford Wilson and the White Friars—The Golden Highway.

THERE were yet no newspapers, even in the second decade of the present century, to compare in circulation with the least of the present dailies published in Fleet Street; but there were scurrilous prints, which in indecency and defamation exceeded the worst modern rag, and though not more mischievous socially than the modern so-called Society journals, which print personalities mostly supplied by the intimate acquaintances of the persons victimised, they were notorious for exacting blackmail. *The Age*, under the direction of Charles Molloy Westmacott, and the *Satirist*, under that of the unscrupulous Barnard Gregory, will still be remembered by some people now in the evening of life. They were succeeded by *The Town*, under the direction of the so-called "Baron" Nicholson, a talented man, who

having studied for the bar, conducted a disreputable entertainment called "a Judge and Jury," consisting of a series of mock trials, ribald travesties of the procedure of a court of justice, which was held at a tavern in an alley in the Strand. Among the disreputable journals must also be named the *John Bull* of that day, a newspaper expressly started for traducing, slandering, and ridiculing the indiscreet and unhappy Queen Caroline. To conduct this unsavoury work Theodore Hook was engaged, but the actual proprietorship of the paper was a mystery which has not been solved. If the burly, black-whiskered humorist knew it, he never divulged the secret; and though during the first years of its existence the printers and registered proprietors were fined and imprisoned for libel, the publication continued. This increased the success of the paper, which from the first had received the support of numbers of unknown persons becoming subscribers; and the journal, the price of which was sevenpence, reached the then extraordinary circulation of 12,000 copies weekly. The *John Bull*, notwithstanding its degrading intentions, was ably conducted, and often teemed with wit and literary excellence.

The Rev. Mr. Barham (Thomas Ingoldsby, of the Ingoldsby Legends, and a close friend of Hook) was one of the contributors, and with his queer, humorous face and lame foot, was often in Fleet Street, as he lived at the Chapter House of Saint Paul's. Samuel Rogers, the poet and banker, who lived far into the century, for he died in 1855, at the age of

ninety, contributed verses to it, which were not in the least political. He was the greatest anecdotist and most amusing witty story teller of his time, and his table talk and letters are still bright enough to set up a dozen *raconteurs* for a lifetime, for he reduced his stories, as he did his poems, to the highest degree of polish, so that no superfluous word or feeble periphrasis should diminish their effect.

Thomas Haynes Bayly was another contributor to *John Bull*, and James Smith, one of the authors of the "Rejected Addresses," was supposed to write for it, but warmly denied ever having sent a line to the paper, which was tabooed in some aristocratic circles where he was a visitor, and notably by the Countess of Jersey, the president of Almack's, who declared that she would exclude from her brilliant receptions anyone who was connected with it.

The brilliant and talented William Maginn also wrote for *John Bull*, but only as a free lance, and just as he wrote for other magazines and newspapers. The circulation of the paper fell off after the death of Queen Caroline, and the profits of £4,000 a year, of which Hook got half, were so reduced that he was reduced also, and on his retirement the *John Bull* became a High Church Tory paper, and at a later date a journal with a reputation for containing accurate and ample ecclesiastical information.

Poor Maginn became an assistant editor of the *Standard*, then an evening paper only, under the direction of Doctor Giffard, the father of the recent

Lord Chancellor, Lord Halsbury, and of Mr. Harry Giffard, one of the Registrars of the Bankruptcy Court.

The varied talents of the accomplished Dr. Maginn, who was learned with the wise and witty in the society of wits, were acknowledged by the Tories, whose cause he supported, by admirable compliments, but he received no very substantial reward for his brilliant services, and his habits of intemperance, no less than his generosity, kept him poor. Worse still, he was of delicate constitution, and the life he led hastened the fatal effects of the consumptive tendency from which he suffered. After being for some time in prison for debt, he was released only to die, in 1841, at Walton-on-Thames, at the comparatively early age of forty-nine.

Theodore Hook is remembered for one or two novels, especially that of "Jack Bragg," and for the traditions of his amusing powers as a wit and an improvisatore, but still more for the extravagant practical jokes of which he was the master and perpetrator. One of his sayings about Rogers has been preserved. The countenance of the older poet had become colourless and cadaverous as he advanced in life, and was so remarkable in this respect that Byron, in one of his quarrelsome moods, had written some malignant lines about it. Rogers was greatly hurt, and for some time they kept apart, but were afterwards reconciled. Theodore Hook advised the friends of Rogers to induce him not to attend Byron's funeral, as he would stand in danger of being recog-

nised by the undertaker as a corpse he had screwed down some six weeks before.

To return to the development of the newspaper press, it may be mentioned that in the first quarter of the present century there were no repeated editions of daily papers.

The *Courier*, an evening paper which changed its politics two or three times, and was published near the stage entrance of the Lyceum theatre about seventy years ago, was said to be the first which brought out successive editions. As "flying" newsvendors, who blew post horns and shouted the latest intelligence, were employed to disseminate the evening papers, the streets in that locality, and those further afield, resounded with stentorian shouts of sensational events, in editions appearing within a few minutes of each other.

A writer in *All The Year Round*, in 1865, records that any scrap of news sufficed to make an edition. A friend of his father remembered that when Bellingham shot Mr. Perceval, the *Courier* published edition after edition from the moment of the murderer's arrest to that of his execution, chronicling the prisoner's demeanour in Newgate. The last line of important news one evening was—

> "Fourth Edition. *Courier* Office, 10 min. past 6.
> The villain refuses to be shaved!"

Among the names of the pioneers of what has long been known as popular instructive literature, that of Charles Knight, the famous printer and publisher in Ludgate Hill and Fleet Street, holds a prominent, if

not the very first place. His *Penny Magazine* and *Penny Cyclopædia* were regarded with astonishment, as marvellous contributions to those cheap and excellent publications by which he sought to promote popular education and the provision of pure entertaining literature. His literary attainments enabled him to edit and contribute to some of the best of the works which he published, and he gathered about him a number of men, of whom Macaulay in his early days was one, and Leigh Hunt another, whose abilities were enlisted in the production of works—notably, the magnificent editions of Shakespeare—which were issued by this worthy, simple-minded, and indefatigable representative of the spiritual, as well as of the material, Highway of Letters. He lived to within a comparatively recent period, one of the bookiest men, in the best sense, who ever walked and wrought in Fleet Street; and those who know him only by reputation, as well as many who remember his active figure and frank, bright, intelligent face, will concur in the instantaneous reply of Douglas Jerrold, of whose wit Knight was a constant admirer, when they met at a Club to which they both belonged. "Jerrold," said the famous publisher, one evening, "I am growing very old and I wish you would write my epitaph."

"It is done, my dear fellow," was the reply. "Here it is. 'Good (K)night.'"

The mere mention of some of the men who at that period were among the *habitués* of Fleet Street, suggests that several of them lived and worked under both the old and the new literary dispensation.

One of the latest of these was the young writer who was, so to speak, the foremost representative in the World of Letters of a transitional period in which manners and customs were undergoing a complete alteration, and even the people and the places associated with the story of London highways and their traditions were passing away.

Charles Dickens, who was brought to London, while he was yet a child, from the suburb of Chatham, where his family had lived in straitened circumstances, became acquainted with aspects of life which he would not so keenly have appreciated but for the vicissitudes of his boyhood. He came with powers of imagination and faculty of characterisation heightened by the early perusal of the stories of masters of fiction—of Goldsmith, Fielding, Smollett, and other writers of a previous generation—and in his childish leisure lived amidst the persons and in the localities which they made real to him. But his own vivid imagination and wondrous faculty of subtle observation and graphic delineation so rapidly developed, that he himself became a master at an age when his amazing ability excited the wonder and admiration of his older contemporaries, and of a vast multitude of readers of all classes. Numbers of these were familiar with the scenes and the personages which this youth, who had scarcely reached man's estate, presented to them with such vivid and yet easy, rollicking humour that the whole town, and then the whole country, and, indeed, half the countries in the world,

were infected by it, and "Pickwick" became an almost universal note of hilarity and good-fellowship.

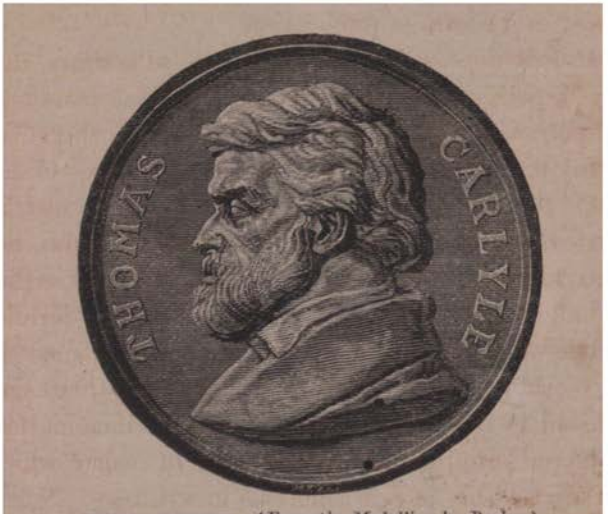
It was, perhaps, fortunate for Dickens that his first work was, by circumstances, necessarily directed to descriptions of characters and social conditions which were passing away, but had not disappeared.

The "Pickwick Papers" stood, and still stands, as a faithful, if accentuated, record of the time just before stage-coaches were superseded by railways and road-side inns by hotels, and when the multifarious aspects of life in the great metropolis were slowly, but surely, changing like a dissolving view, which gives place little by little to the transformations that obliterate it.

Charles Dickens, the youth whose experiences have been told by his friend and biographer, Mr. John Forster, who had succeeded to the editorship of the *Examiner* after the Hunts had relinquished it to another proprietor, was not unknown in the World of Letters at the time that he took chambers in Furnivals Inn, and began his first great work. He had laboriously taught himself shorthand, and had been a reporter for the *True Sun*, and thence went in a similar capacity to the *Morning Chronicle*, to which he contributed the "sketches" which were afterwards published under his early *nom de plume*, as "Sketches by Boz." "Pickwick" took the town by storm, and "Oliver Twist" appeared when he undertook what proved to be a brief editorship of *Bentley's Miscellany*. Distinguished friends began to gather round him. Fleet Street echoed his name. His presence was noticed in assemblies to which he was invited, and

the intensity and vivid expression of his handsome, youthful face made him remarkable in any company.

Even Carlyle succumbed to Pickwick, and was it not Mrs. Carlyle who said that his radiant countenance at once attracted and arrested attention; that it was "like a face of steel"?



THOMAS CARLYLE. (*From the Medallion by Boehm.*)

Whatever it expressed was not more radiant, intense, and full of individuality than his work was. For years he introduced to a vast reading public scenes of pathos, wit, and humour, the reality of which stirred the emotions and strengthened social and domestic sentiments. Year after year he introduced to the reading world not mere characters, but men, women, and children, in whose real existence both he (writing with sympathetic exaltation) and his ad-

mirers, recognising the force and natural congruity even of the more extravagant of them, came to believe. For fifty years the characters in the novels of Charles Dickens have been spoken of as real living persons, and their sayings and doings quoted, to illustrate essays, leading articles and descriptions in almost every form of publication.

It was no wonder that Dickens sometimes displayed, perhaps insensibly, a somewhat self-conscious and patronising air. What must have been the effect on any man's mind to read the new chapters of his books to an audience such as that which met at Forster's chambers or elsewhere to listen to him, not often without some display of strong emotion, either in laughter or tears? Forster, Mulready, Jerrold, Carlyle, Thackeray, Macready—the leading men in the World of Letters—were at one time or other eager to listen to the latest achievement of his imagination, for he put into his reading the sense of reality which had aroused his deepest emotions in writing.

Like Richardson he seemed not to be able to go on writing happily without an occasional audience. There was much, not only of the dramatist, but of the actor, in his mental constitution, and it is on record that he could not be easy while he was in Italy without once coming all the way to London to read one of his Christmas books, or a part of it, which he had just finished.

That he is associated with the Highway of Letters goes without saying, and though after he had accepted and soon relinquished the editorship of the *Daily*

News, he seldom contributed to any periodical till he established "Household Words," his face and figure were associated, not alone with Fleet Street, nor with the highways of London, but with its curious nooks and corners and obscure byways. For who has depicted them as he did; who, having met him in one of his frequent peregrinations, could forget that intense, penetrating look, that wonderful eye, which seemed not only to see, but to *grasp* the face or the object to which he directed his attention, and by some subtle, marvellous process to photograph it on his memory for future development. As an example of Dickens's picturesque description, as applied to Fleet Street, we may refer to his quaint delineation, in "A Tale of Two Cities," of "Telson's" Bank by Temple Bar, which for quiet humour is equal to anything he ever wrote, as the story itself is, in the opinion of competent judges, the most truly artistic work he ever achieved.

Though parliamentary reporting for the principal newspapers had long been recognised when Dickens wrote for the *Chronicle*, the work of the *special* reporter was difficult and even hazardous, for he had to make journeys to remote country places in any conveyance which he could secure; and Dickens once, in an admirable speech, described his early experiences in reporting as having been associated with journeys on every kind of road by every kind of vehicle taking notes at a meeting in a field in a torrent of rain, his note-book shielded with a pocket-handkerchief by a friend, and the return journey being made in a post-chaise, in which he endeavoured

to transcribe his notes by the light from a stable lantern. The rush of coaches in Fleet Street after an important provincial meeting frequently blocked the highway and caused a congestion at Shoe Lane, as the reporters strove who should be earliest with a full note of the speeches.

The establishment of *Punch* in the Highway of Letters, above fifty years ago, was an event of some importance, and yet several contradictory accounts of the foundation of the leading comic journal have appeared. Even the present staff under their able editor seem to have been singularly ill-informed on the subject of the first contributors; and several versions of the original choice of the title have been put forward. It is certain that several attempts to establish a weekly comic journal had been made, that the *London Figaro*, and even *Punch*, had appeared in combination with other titles, and that Douglas Jerrold had been associated with more than one of the attempts. There can be little doubt, either, that the notion of starting a new comic paper was mooted and partly formulated at the Shakespeare's Head, a tavern in Wych Street, where Mr. Mark Lemon was the "landlord," or proprietor, and that he became the first editor, and retained that position until his death at Crawley, in Sussex, in 1870. Thirdly, there is no doubt that the principal literary originator was Henry Mayhew, eldest of the brothers Mayhew, of whom Henry, Horace, and Augustus were best known in the Highway of Letters. Mr. Last, a printer in Crane Court, was

one of the first persons applied to, and reference was made to Mark Lemon as a man not only witty himself, but the cause of wit in others who met at his well-known tavern. He was also capable of doing good service in suggesting a competent staff of contributors. The names of Douglas Jerrold, Henry Mayhew, Stirling Coyne, Gilbert à Beckett, W. H. Wills, and H. R. Grattan appeared on the literary staff. Mr. Ebenezer Landells was appointed as engraver, and Messrs. Henning, Newman, Hine, and Phillips, artists. The prospectus was drawn by Mr. Mark Lemon, and *The London Charivari* was suggested as a second title. The acquisition of Mr. Percival Leigh afterwards brought in his friend, John Leech, the caricaturist, a veritable frequenter of Fleet Street, for he was born in the Old London Coffee-house on Ludgate Hill, which was kept by his father, and was once famous for its punch and as the place to which jurors were sent during a trial. Leech, in turn, brought in Albert Smith, one of the most rattling and versatile writers on social comic subjects, afterwards the author of two or three excellent novels, and finally the famous entertainer of large audiences who went to the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, to laugh at his charming humorous lectures and panoramas of "The Ascent of Mont Blanc" and "The Overland Route."

The new publication was full of genial fun and refined humour, and it became a success as far as the appreciation of the public was concerned; but the sale did not cover the expenses, and it was taken over by Messrs. Bradbury and Evans. Some of its

artists and contributors left, among them Mr. Landells and Mr. Henry Mayhew; but there were some accessions, the most important being that of Mr. Horace Mayhew, who had just returned from Ger-

STREET FRONT OF THE FLEET PRISON.

many, and was known to his friends as "Ponny" Mayhew—a man of infinite jest, graceful humour, and quiet, conciliatory manners.

Among the contributors was the erratic Doctor Maginn (the "Captain Shandon" of Thackeray), who composed the first *Punch's Almanac* while he was in the Fleet Prison, which was soon to be pulled down, never to be rebuilt. The name of Thackeray adds another to the long list of those who almost daily assembled in the Highway of Letters, and he, Gilbert à Beckett, Jerrold, Albert Smith and Leech, were the principal supporters of the paper.

There were occasional tiffs, as when Charles Louis Napoleon was likely to be elected Emperor, and a consultation was held as to the tone *Punch* should take. One of the coterie said it would be best to be indefinite. "Oh!" retorted à Beckett, "if you're not definite you'd better be dumb in it."

There were so many opportunities for Punch's cudgel outside, however, that internal bickerings were few. Alfred Tennyson was a contributor only once, in a retort upon "The New Timon," in which Bulwer Lytton had attacked the coming laureate.

That retort was not lacking in vigorous personalities, supposed to be uttered by the old Timon against the appropriator of his name and title, to whom the rugged old satirist refers as "the man who wears the stays," and "who shakes a mane *en papillotes*." Timon ends by crying "Off bandbox!" This was strong enough, but the "mane *en papillotes*" was supposed to have done the business.

Henry Mayhew and his brother Augustus were well known in Fleet Street, long after the secession from *Punch*, and "the brothers Mayhew" were engaged in issuing several amusing *brochures*, which were at the time extremely popular, while the exhaustive work on "London Labour and the London Poor," of which Henry was the projector, and in which he was assisted by able colleagues, greatly added to the reputation he had achieved by a busy literary career; and it was followed by a volume on "The Criminal Prisons of London." Augustus, whose genial manners and portly presence were

familiar to the journalistic world of that time, was very much in evidence at most of the literary rendezvous. A story was told of the occasion of his joining the staff of contributors to the *Illustrated London News*, which it would now be difficult to verify. A small coterie—of which the founder of the great illustrated paper, Mr. Herbert Ingram, Mr. Brough, the father of the brothers Brough, and one or two others, were members—used to meet in the quaint old coffee-room of the Cheshire Cheese, and there they formed a club, to which they gave the title of "The Wits," for no reason that was ever discovered. One afternoon they were discoursing on astronomy, and one of the party observed that it was a wonderful reflection, that the sun was a million miles distant from the earth. Upon which a quiet, but potential-looking young man who, with a friend, was seated in a corner of the room ventured, with apologies for interposing in the conversation, to remark that the distance was ninety-five millions of miles. Such a stupendous statement required to be verified, and a messenger was sent to the office of *The News* for a book on Astronomy, upon reference to which, the astonished members of the Wits' Club found that the stranger was justified in his correction. Having inquired his name, the proprietor of the then recently-established paper exclaimed, "Sir, you are a man of genius, why don't you write for the *Illustrated London News?*"

Another anecdote about "Gus," as he was affec-

tionately called, relates that on one of the occasions when both he and Henry were in pecuniary difficulties, and liable to arrest, the latter retired to a house in the country, and prepared for a state of siege against the sheriff's officers, who were presently seen prowling about the premises. With the amiable intention of bearing his brother company, Gus went down and contrived to gain admission, but as provisions ran short, devised a scheme for taking the bailiffs off while Henry made his escape. With this purpose he gaily went out for a walk, chuckling to observe that he was followed by the "myrmidons of the law," and after leading them for a considerable distance suffered them to overtake him.

"Mr. Mayhew?" said the principal officer.

"Oh dear, yes," was the reply, in tones of the most polished politeness, "but I am not Mr. Henry Mayhew. I am Mr. Augustus Mayhew."

"All right, sir. It's Mr. Augustus Mayhew as we want," said the official, and thereupon arrested him and conveyed him to London.

In 1852 Douglas Jerrold undertook the editorship of that still famous weekly, entitled *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, the first of the penny papers. Ten years before, it had been started by its courageous, energetic and cheery proprietor, Mr. Edward Lloyd, in a shop in Shoreditch, and in the following year had been enlarged to twelve pages and removed to offices in Salisbury Square. Though its price then was threepence, Mr. Lloyd found it a severe task to fight against the stamp duty, but in July, 1853,

that duty was abolished, and the price was reduced to twopence. In 1861 the paper duty was abolished, and *Lloyd's* had been already reduced to a penny, in anticipation. Under Jerrold's editorship it prospered

WINE OFFICE COURT AND THE "CHESHIRE CHEESE."

greatly, and at his death, in accordance with a promise made to him by Mr. Lloyd, his son, William Blanchard Jerrold, was appointed to succeed him.

At a comparatively recent date the late enterprising proprietor, then a man of large means

purchased the paper called the *Clerkenwell News*, once famous because of its profitable system of inserting small and cheap advertisements, and included it in a scheme for issuing a morning newspaper in the Liberal interest, entitled the *Daily Chronicle*, and now one of the most successful of the daily papers, all of which, except the *Times*, have reduced their price to a penny. The circulation of *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* is phenomenal, even in these days of large issues, its output approaching, if it does not exceed, three-quarters of a million.

In 1856 a few of the young rising authors who met in the Highway of Letters and elsewhere joined in starting a magazine called *The Train*, under the editorship of Mr. Edmund Yates, who then held an appointment in the Post Office and was one of the liveliest of journalists.

The staff of contributors, known among themselves as the "train-band," included Robert and William Brough, both known as successful writers of farces, burlesques, and extravaganzas, and the former as a poet of great ability; their brother, John Cargill Brough, a scientist and one of the most amiable and trustworthy friends and comrades to be found in the Highway of Letters; Edward Draper, a friend of Albert Smith and his collaborateur in *The Man in the Moon*, a little square, dumpy magazine, replete with genuine humour and innocent fun; Godfrey Wordsworth Turner, whose recent death has been a loss to the lovers of a style singularly pure and attractive; James Hain Friswell,

the author of "The Gentle Life"; Sutherland Edwards, whose contributions to current journalism—no less than his books—have lost none of their charm; Lewis Carroll, the parent of "Alice in Wonderland"; John Hollingshead, W. Moy Thomas, William P. Hale, and, not to mention others, George Augustus Sala, who, if one may be excused for saying so, has so long been a representative of the whole circle of journalism in the Highway of Letters, that it would be no more than a fitting recognition if a comfortable mansion were built for his residence in some pleasant space in Fleet Street made vacant for the purpose by the City Corporation.

The "train band" carried on their work with abundant applause and increasing reputation till four volumes of the magazine were completed, but the lack of commercial experience prevented the speculation from becoming remunerative, and except the excitement of a glorious contest with a rival magazine, edited by James Hannay, who afterwards secured the post of British Consul at Barcelona, gained little but the advantage of having formed a compact literary association, which, though somewhat Bohemian in its characteristics, had made a mark in the Highway of Letters, and met again in happy *camaraderie* as contributors to other periodicals, notably *The Welcome Guest*, a magazine which ran for a considerable time, and was at one period of its existence edited by Robert Brough.

The establishment of *Household Words* by Charles Dickens in 1859, and its later conversion into *All the*

Year Round, had given a fresh interest to the World of Readers, and the institution of the Savage Club, which held some of the best of its early meetings in a barely furnished back room, lighted by a dingy skylight, on the first floor of the Lyceum Tavern, was another event indirectly associated with the Highway of Letters. Fresh contributors had joined the staff of *Punch*, Thackeray was among the wayfarers in Fleet Street, the "Snob Papers" and "Jeames's Diary" were moving the town to inextinguishable laughter; but Mark Lemon was succeeded as editor by Mr. Tom Taylor, and he by Mr. Shirley Brooks, and the flavour of the wit was then somewhat altered. It became rather too superfine for a large circle of ordinary readers; and some of the younger humorists who found it had become exclusive, preferred to support a rival entitled *Fun*, which was started in Fleet Street, the proprietor being a Mr. Maclean, a looking-glass and picture-frame maker, who also initiated a periodical called *Saturday Night*. Mr. Francis Cowley Burnand, already known to fame as a humorous dramatist, had a hand in both publications; but the editorship of *Fun* devolved upon Tom Hood, the son of the famous author of "The Song of the Shirt," which had appeared first in *Punch*. Tom Hood, not long from Oxford, but already with a reputation in literature, and especially in comic literature, and a knack of making humorous sketches, had for some time been on the look-out for the editorship of a comic journal. His tall, graceful figure and dark, handsome face were already con-

spicuous in the Highway of Letters; his affectionate, gentle, almost womanly disposition endeared him to a number of friends ready to enlist under his banner, and his shout of triumph as he leaned half-way out of a hansom to greet a friend who saw him coming through Covent Garden, was that of a boy, as waving his umbrella, he announced that he had "got a comic," adding, "I shall want *you*."

What weekly dinners used to be held at "Carr's," by the corner of Dane's Inn, when Matt Morgan was the *Fun* "cartoonist"!

What a merry and appreciative company used to meet in the dingy editorial room at the back of the publishing office in Fleet Street! What comrades they were, that contingent in the Highway of Letters! Alas! the pen may well falter before their names are written, the tongue may sorrowfully fail to speak of them in a voice louder than a sigh. So few are left to answer, should the muster roll be called. The genial editor himself died when he should have been in his prime. Tom Robertson, to whom fortune came too late—though his sparkling comedies held the stage of the theatre, where all London and half the provinces went to laugh and cry at *Caste* and *Ours* and the tender mirth of *School*. He left Tom Hood and another of the *Fun* brotherhood to be his executors and guardians to his children, for they could some way interpret his bitter jibes and turn the current of his sometimes reckless talk, knowing what a reserve of human kindliness lay nearest to his heart. William Kingston Sawyer, true

and dear friend, with kindling smile and ready hand to encourage and to help those who sought his aid. His philosophy was to cultivate cheerfulness, his religion to be and to do good, and children loved him, for he was a child himself among them. Henry S. Leigh, the writer of quaint and tuneful songs, of carols of Cockaigne, which he would consent to sing to friends when he was not talking metaphysics, remembered from the conversations of his father with the visitors at his art school. Henry Byron, whose fame as a writer of comedies is still green, and who first saw the merit of Robertson's dramas, and put them on the stage at the Prince of Wales's Theatre when he and Marie Wilton (Mrs. Bancroft) were lessees, and John Hare was rising in the public regard as an actor of subtle faculty, with that suppressed force and artful naturalness which are the marks not only of genius, but of unsparing study. William Jeffery Prowse, the young writer whose genius compassed the whole round of literary expression, and could, with equal ease and completeness, write an instalment of "Nicholas' Sporting Notes" for *Fun*, an earnest leading article for the *Daily Telegraph*, a poem fragrant with simple metaphor from flower and field, or a story strong in incident and natural emotion. Alas! like Keats, his mother's early friend, he died too young, and before his strength was set, for, like Keats, he suffered from a tendency to consumption, which led to his being obliged to seek a more genial climate at Mentone, whence came the sad news of his death. Some of the members of this little company

in the Highway of Letters joined in the production of Christmas books, consisting of a continuous story, or set of stories threaded, as it were, on one string of plot, an effort in which their frequent exchange of ideas in relation to a common centre of interest enabled them to succeed when other attempts of a similar kind have failed. The collaborators in these Christmas volumes were Tom Hood, Jeffery Prowse, Tom Robertson, William Schwenk Gilbert, who wrote the Bab Ballads for *Fun*, Clement Scott, and another writer who had achieved some reputation for sketches of character and stories, both humorous and pathetic.

Mr. Gilbert has, perhaps, crowned the edifice of his ambition by the continued and deserved success of his comic operas, some of them elaborated from the original Bab Ballads, which, at all events, give the keynote of his quaint and attractive extravagances. He is no longer a frequenter of the Highway of Letters, in the sense of haunting Fleet Street. Perhaps he had enough of it when he was in chambers, and, having been called to the bar, had to divide his time between reading proofs and reading briefs; but he can scarcely have forgotten the old days of *Rates and Taxes*, *A Bunch of Keys*, and *The Five Alls*.

Sir Arthur Sullivan, too, was among the band of busy contributors to current literature who met in the little editorial room behind the publisher's shop. He was not Sir Arthur then, and had not yet overtaken the well-merited fame which, as Arthur

Sketchley would have said, was "layin' in ambush for him, unbeknown."

Mr. Clement Scott, in addition to his labours as a dramatic critic, has done suit and service in general literature, and occasional stirring verse, and has recently concerned himself in the preparation of the reminiscences of the late Mr. Edward Laman Blanchard, one of the best-known and best-loved wayfarers in the Highway of Letters for more than half a century, a truly universal journalist, who sounded the whole gamut of literature.

Mr. J. Ashby-Sterry, too (one of the loyal friends and companions of the *Fun* circle), was once assiduous in his attendance in Fleet Street, but that was when he had chambers in the Temple, full of portentous carved furniture and with a wide fireplace, which in winter evenings, when there was a roaring fire in the grate, and when both doors were shut, made the discussion of a plot, and of suitable liquid refreshments, a serious prelude to turning out again on to the dark staircase and into the keen air that blew from the river. His "Tiny Travels" have taken him farther west, but his poetic pen, and even his quaint, descriptive essays, are the results of his early experiences east of Temple Bar.

Among others who were in that Fleet Street companionship was one of Charles Dickens's trusted contributors, Andrew Halliday, or Andrew Halliday Duff, son of a Scotch Presbyterian minister. He came to London and took a situation as classical master in a private school at South Hackney; but his heart was

not in teaching, and he used to escape to find occasional solace in the gallery of one or other of the theatres, till at last he escaped altogether, and took to writing, as well as seeing, farces and burlesques. He, in conjunction with Mr. Frederick Lawrence, may be said to have commenced those travesties of Sir Walter Scott, and other classical writers, which very much shocked people, who asked where such irreverence was to end; but Halliday was as efficient as a serious essayist as he was when composing a burlesque or preparing a spectacular drama for Drury Lane. Mr. Lawrence had a reputation for a very quick and pungent wit, and for smart and clever repartee. It was he who referred to having seen a gentleman eating two mutton chops, which disappeared down his throat like a pair of hotel carpet slippers down a well staircase. It is also related of him that on one occasion, going into a luncheon bar, where a customer was consuming a highly-fried sausage and mashed potatoes, he responded to the barmaid's question, "What would you like, sir?" by retorting, "I'll take a *black-and-tan one*, like that gentleman's," at the same time pointing to the sausage.

How the recollection of the frequenters of Fleet Street at this period crowd upon us! Colonel Alfred Bate Richards, editor of the *Morning Advertiser*, and reputed to be the originator of the Volunteer movement, what a striking presence his was, with his tall, somewhat gaunt figure, his long moustache, his military bearing, like that of a *beau sabreur*. Sweet-voiced William Fielding, Vicar Choral of St. Paul's.

Hearty, hospitable, kindly Wharton Simpson, the great authority on photography, and proprietor of a journal devoted to it; but an authority also on many other things, he being a man of multitudinous acquirements.

Alas! how the register of those who have departed lengthens. But there are still friends good and true with whom to clasp hands in Fleet Street, and one whose name has not been mentioned before, though he long ago won a place in the World of Letters, and knew nearly all those who have walked in its highway for the last—let us not say how many years. He shall be spoken of by the title he has, perhaps, heard oftenest, and likes as well as any—the Founder of Clubs. To John Crawford Wilson was due the initiation of the only truly literary club of somewhat the old pattern that now exists, and it is green and flourishing in Fleet Street—not the "Press Club," which is of later growth, and does invaluable work within its limits, nor the Institute of Journalists, which is not a club, but a serious, strenuous, professional association—but the "White Friars." It was instituted in 1868, and inaugurated by a dinner at what was then Radley's Hotel, in Bridge Street, Blackfriars, at which the chair was taken by Henry Barnett, then editor of the *Sunday Times*, and formerly preacher of orthodox doctrine at the chapel in South Place, Finsbury, where Fox, the heterodox orator and free trader, was once wont to hold forth. The vice-chairman was Tom Hood, and there were present, besides Mr. Crawford Wilson, George Cruik-

shank, W. J. M. Torrens, George Augustus Sala, Thomas Spencer, the scientist, Hepworth Dixon, William Boys, Thomas Hawker, Joseph Knight, Dr. W. B. Richardson, F. Sandys, Westland Marston, W. Fielding, George Painter, Barry Sullivan, William Sawyer, and another. Many others, including those whose names have been already mentioned in connection with the recent days of Fleet Street, afterwards joined the club, but it never was, nor is it now, a very numerous society. Having to remove when Radley's Hotel was pulled down, it migrated to the Mitre, as a fit and proper locality for a club which grew more strictly literary, and was named the White Friars. It is now in its own room at Anderton's Hotel, and is still sound and flourishing—a brotherhood given to hospitality, and the occasional entertainment of strangers who now and then, but not often, turn out to be a sort of angels, especially when they are Americans, of which persuasion there are frequent and inquiring guests and more than one member. Around the wall are the photographs of many past and present Friars; but the brethren need not these to stir in their hearts the memory, or bring to their lips the frequent mention, of those who, though they dwell in the Golden Highway of the Heavenly Kingdom, are not far, let us humbly hope and pray, from these who have walked with them in loving companionship in the Highway of Letters upon earth.

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